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Thesis

VARIATIONS OF TEXT AND STRUCTURE IN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN DRAMA,
1920-1932

by

Esther Phelps-Jones

(B.R.E., Boston University, 1925)

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

1933

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Note to Readers

Following every play discussed in the main part of this Thesis, there is appended a synopsis of the plot. For convenient reference, these synopses are arranged on yellow paper.

C O N T E N T S

	Page
PREFACE	
<u>Expressionism Defined</u>	1
<u>Trail-Blazers in Expressionism</u>	
Frank Wedekind Iconoclasts	3
Walter Hasenclever	
Gerhart Hauptmann A Master of Variation	5
Leonid Andreyev A Versatile Eccentric	7
Nikolai Evreinov and the Monodrama	9
Georg Kaiser and the New Symbolism	11
Sponsors of Modern Stagecraft	15
VARIATIONS OF TEXT AND STRUCTURE	
<u>The Play in a Series of Scenes</u>	
TIME IS A DREAM Henri Lenormand	16
MAN AND TH ^E E MASSES Ernst Toller	25
THE EMPEROR JONES Eugene O'Neill	32
THE ADDING MACHINE Elmer Rice	40
DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS Eugene O'Neill	48
MIMA David Belasco	56
OF THEE I SING George Kaufman and Morris Ryskind	64
TREAD THE GREEN GRASS Paul Green	71
THE GREEN PASTURES Marc Connelly	79

VARIATIONS OF TEXT AND STRUCTURE, Continued

<u>Innovations</u>		Page
R.U.R.	Karel Capek	94
GOAT-SONG	Franz Werfel	102
BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK	George Kaufman and Marc Connelly	110
THE GREAT GOD BROWN	Eugene O'Neill	119
MACHINAL	Sophie Treadwell	129
EACH IN HIS OWN WAY	Luigi Pirandello	136
SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR	Luigi Pirandello	143
LAZARUS LAUGHED	Eugene O'Neill	149
PROCESSIONAL	John Lawson	157
STRANGE INTERLUDE	Eugene O'Neill	164
THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS	Paul Claudel	173
THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR	Paul Raynal	185
MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA	Eugene O'Neill	192
LUCRECE	Andre Obey	202
CONCLUSION		204
BIBLIOGRAPHY		216



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PREFACE

The plays to be discussed in the main part of this thesis are not universally recognized as great dramas. Indeed, in selecting a group of expressionistic plays, the student is dismayed to observe the bitterly intensive differences of opinion which are often directed at unsuspecting works of the theatre whose sole *raison d'être* is a medium of expression rather than a purposely created target for the barbs of critics. The plays selected for discussion do not comprise an exhaustive list, for many remarkable achievements of the past twelve years have not yet been translated and so, commendable plays in Russian, German and other languages have been unavailable.

Neither has the writer attempted a formal classification of her selections in Expressionistic drama. Such a category would be impossible because of the conflicting theories among several schools of criticism. The decade of the thirties is close on the heels of the decade of the twenties and thus it is too close to establish a perspective which can be permanently valid. Like most deviations from the straight and narrow highway, the pleasant paths of research have offered fascinating vistas and if the progress of the theatre eventually demands a return to the conventional technique, we can remember there have been primroses!

What is Expressionistic Drama? Walter Prichard Eaton defines it as ".....the subjective instead of the objective projection of the characters in the play.....Expressionism projects on the stage the inner workings of the characters

and places there its chief emphasis."¹

Frank W. Chandler offers the following comment: "To say that the work of an expressionistic playwright fails to resemble anything on sea or land is merely to compliment, not to criticize him. He unfolds a story devised to convey some abstract idea, some mood or fancy of his own. He cares nothing for the probability or even the possibility of the events he uses. His plot may therefore be as chaotic or fantastic as the inconsequential turnings of a kaleidoscope."²

S. Marion Tucker makes the observation, "Nothing in the drama is more difficult to define; its shapes are protean; its spirit is elusive. It is concerned less with superficial phenomena than with ideas and states of mind; seeks to penetrate beneath surfaces to the inner and universal reality; often presents its ideas in terms of symbol; sometimes conducts its action on more than one plane of consciousness, mingling reality with dream. All this is expressed by means of a strange and striking technique that varies widely as practiced by various dramatists but that is consistently marked by total disregard of all conventionality."³

Louis Goldberg, who attempts to define Expressionism in relation to Impressionism, concludes, "Expressionism is as yet an aim more than an achievement. It is a revolt against Naturalism, international in character and spiritual

- 1 The Drama in English. Walter Prichard Eaton. Page 323
- 2 Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler. Page 385
- 3 Modern American and British Plays. S. Marion Tucker. " xii.

in implication.....and represents personality in terms of the world."¹ To draw the lines of demarcation among Expressionism, Impressionism and Symbolism is the subject for another thesis and the writer is determined to avoid such deep waters by venturing to offer the opinion that Expressionism is sufficiently elastic and experimental to adopt the various dramatic foundlings left at its door.

When and how did Expressionistic Drama arise? Professor Chandler aptly states, "To cut capers in art, to treat with contempt the old, to shatter idols revered, - that is the self-appointed mission of such bad boys of the German theatre as (Frank) Wedekind and (Walter) Hasenclever."² Frank Wedekind's revolt against Naturalism, just prior to the World War, has had a tremendous and far-reaching effect upon modern drama. Wedekind, in his challenge to the accepted and casual progress of dramatic technique, created characters in his plays whose very realism motivated later plays by other dramatists now recognized as decidedly expressionistic. True, Wedekind's characters are grotesque and violent and many of the situations he presents are not topics of conversation in polite society, but his fearlessness in taking the lid from some of the typical happenings of life as he viewed it gave impetus to the development of new and startling forms in drama.

In addition to the violent and grotesque characterizations previously mentioned, Wedekind justified his place

1 The Drama of Transition. Louis Goldberg. Pages 275-76.

2 Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler. Page 366.

as a revolutionary force in drama by his depiction of daringly immoral situations, a combination of realism and symbolism and the use of as many as nineteen abrupt scenes in one play such as are found in *THE AWAKENING OF SPRING*. The rock-strewn path along which passionate love supposedly travels suggests to this German dramatist innumerable themes for his plays and he runs the gamut from forbidden passion through the vicissitudes of misunderstood affection to the amusingly satirical love portrayed by the egotistical maestro in *THE TENOR*. One might say that Wedekind wears his heart on his sleeve, but it is apparent to the most casual student of his plays that life has provided him with a warped outlook upon love and he sees it in the degenerate and peculiar forms which are the nuclei of his plots.

Another iconoclast and "bad boy" of the German theatre is Walter Hasenclever, a disciple of Wedekind. The themes of Hasenclever's plays are usually less morbid than those of his master and the younger playwright's work is marked by innovations which indicate the continuance of the spirit of rebellion. The play *MEN* contains several fluctuations of style characteristic of Hasenclever's technique; the use of cross-sectional scenery such as Eugene O'Neill later used in *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS*, offstage noises to establish and perpetuate the mood and tempo of the story, clipped and brief dialogue, and an enigmatical identification of characters whose reality is not evident.

In another play, *THE DECISION*, the characters are tagged as types, a practice which the student frequently finds in

studying later representative plays in Expressionism. In BEYOND the action is carried on by two persons - Jeanne and her lover, Raoul, - but the atmosphere and motivation are provided by the spirit of the dead husband. In the same play Hasenclever relies on theatric devices to denote the denouement of the action.

According to critics, two very recent plays by Hasenclever, MARRIAGES ARE MADE IN HEAVEN and NAPOLEON ENTERS ON THE SCENE, are interesting examples of the new drama. In the foregoing play, daring liberties are taken with the impersonation of the Deity who is arrayed in golfing togs. The writer's unfamiliarity with the German language and the absence of translations prevent a personal study of these play texts. However, from the brief comments on Hasenclever's work, one can understand that he is as experimental a playwright as his predecessor and one time contemporary, Frank Wedekind.

To speak of Gerhart Hauptmann as a trail-blazer seems anachronistic. He is better designated as one who "kept the faith" for he commands variations that range from Naturalism to Expressionism and yet, it is difficult to define specifically his contribution to the type of drama which is the subject of this thesis. Ashley Duke affirms: "Hauptmann has been faithful to his own people; to their aspirations as well as to their speech, to their soul as well as to their countryside.....He has been readier to follow than to lead, readier to echo than to cry in wilderness."¹

1 The Youngest Drama. Ashley Dukes. Pages 27-28

However, in order to render just tribute to the man whom Professor Chandler calls "Master of Central European Drama"¹ a few observations must be given regarding plays which have the earmarks of Expressionism.

In *THE SUNKEN BELL*, Hauptmann shows a preshadowing of the new trends in drama by a development of fantasy both allegorical and poetical whose charming narrative is concerned with humans and demi-gods. The combination of reality and symbolism in *AND PIPPA DANCES* is effective inasmuch as the characters represent such abstractions as Idealism, Intellect, Lust and Beauty. *HANNELE*, a dream play in which real and symbolic figures move freely, reveals expressionistic tendencies by the fanciful ideas of a child whose simple concepts motivate a Jesus who has masqueraded as a schoolmaster, a mother who hovers protectingly as a nurse and a Heaven where angels move in approved celestial duties. *ELORIAN GEYER*, like many of Hauptmann's plays, is a drama of the masses, and the abrupt, frequently disconnected dialogue, the sixty or more speaking characters and the massive development of scenes point to a fertility of ability in this German dramatist.

This brief Preface permits only a pause in appreciation of Hauptmann's versatility and the steadying influence he exerts on the drama of his day, for if Hauptmann cannot be acclaimed as an innovator, he is recognized as a guide post to the student of contemporary

1 Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler P.264.

plays.

Leonid Andreyev, a versatile eccentric and disciple of mystic symbolism, is an interesting contrast to Hauptmann. Whereas Hauptmann so often deals with groups and even masses of people, Andreyev's singularly direct and exclusive concern with the state of mind in one individual presents an arresting study of his themes and technique. The dramatists previously mentioned have been classed as sponsors of the new trends but one can truly say that Andreyev has arrived and his position as an Expressionist cannot be denied. As his most Expressionistic plays were written before the inclusive dates of this thesis, he is placed with the trail-blazers in relation to the plays considered in the main part of this discussion.

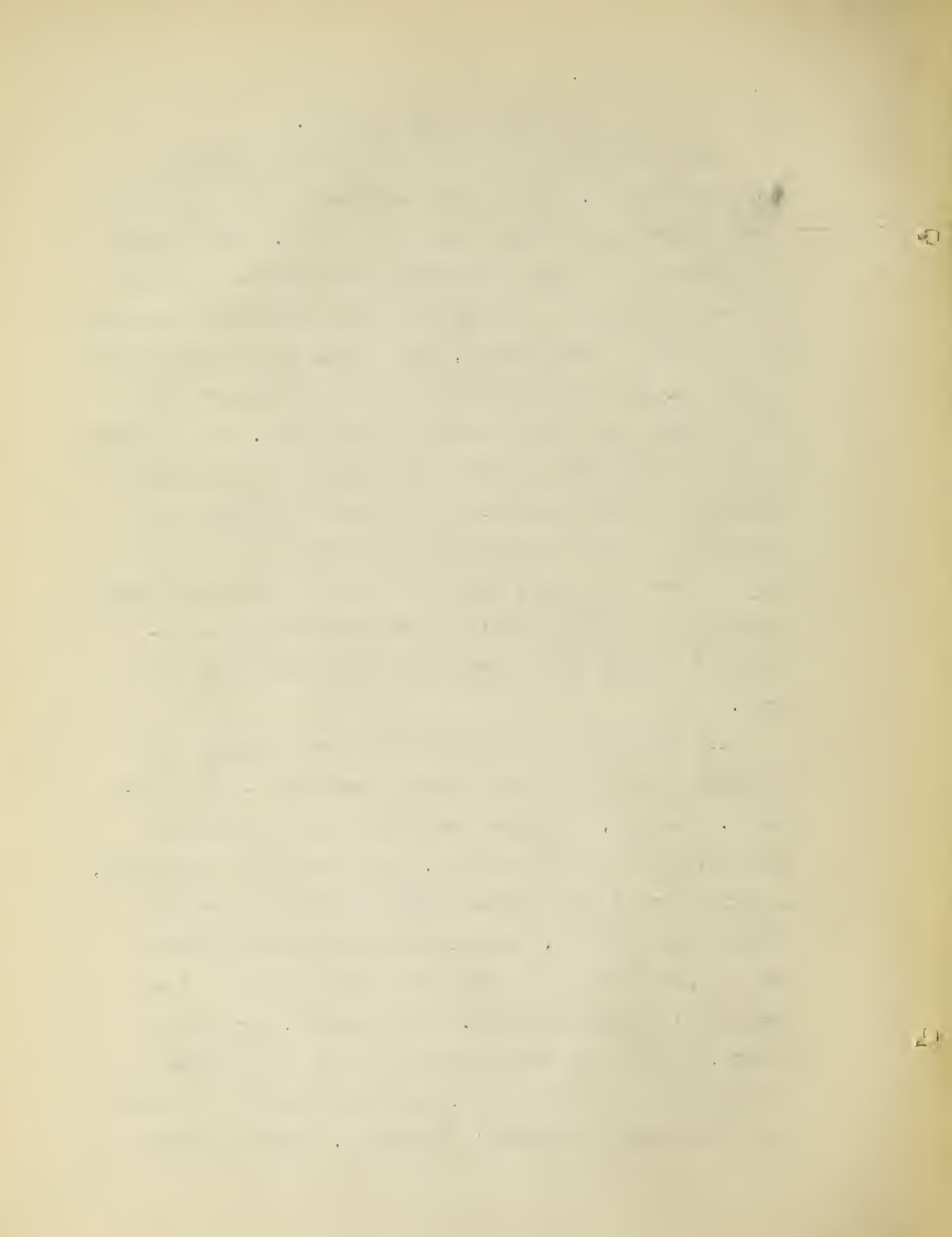
Andreyev is not a master of only one form. Although satire, irony and symbolism characterize his work and there seems to be an endless groping toward some unfulfilled and obscure objective, Andreyev's plays abound in intensely human realities as well as in stark illusions.

THE LIFE OF MAN is a modern morality play. To the writer, this is one of the most interesting of Andreyev's dramas. The symbolism attending man from birth to death is unforgettably presented and the Being in Grey who moves through the story is at once comforting and terrible in his relation to man's inevitable end. One reason, perhaps, for the validity of this work is the reality of the phases of human life - love, success, failure, - although Andreyev

has combined it with fantastical figures.

HE WHO GETS SLAPPED is the most widely known of Andreyev's plays. Against one background move the various types of persons usually found in a circus. The Stranger or He Who Gets Slapped contributes the half-real element to the play for he offers himself as a performing clown and his identity is never known, even though he poisons himself as well as the dancer he loves in order to win her from a rival suitor and thus be her lover in Heaven. The story of clowns who laugh and conduct their antics with breaking hearts is a theme familiar to the most unthinking and sentimental movie fan and Andreyev's play (probably one of the sources for this type of story) is in the same vein although his theories of life are enriched by a philosophical quality which lends beauty and dignity to the role.

in THE BLACK MASKERS Andreyev shows a mastery of Evreinov's contribution to the new technique - the monodrama. In fact, one hears that Andreyev has surpassed Evreinov at his own innovation. This is hardly surprising, for Andreyev is the greater artist and pupils sometimes exceed their masters. in THE BLACK MASKERS Andreyev's use of symbolism is carried farther than in any of his previous or following works. Duke Lorenzo, the host at a mask, is the only real figure in a play filled with maskers who represent doubts, falsehood and evil thoughts - all conceptions of Lorenzo's mentality. Or can one say



that Lorenzo is the only unreal figure and that the maskers are the realities to which Lorenzo has been blind?

Whatever the theme of Andreyev's plot, whatever the technique by which he presents his story, there is always present a clear-cut dominant figure, trailing clouds of mysticism, whose progress is the more definite because of the half-light presentation of the secondary characters.

Nikolai Evreinov's specific contribution to the new expression is the monodrama which Isaac Goldberg defines as follows: "The essence of Evreinov's theory of the monodrama.....is the psychological fusion of the spectator with the actor, and of the stage with the presentation of the acting character. The play then becomes, literally, 'a drama of one'; the actor is the spectator, and the scene is reality, not as it appears to another, but as it seems in ever-changing aspect to the actor-spectator himself. All the characters other than the protagonist are not independent individuals, as upon the conventional stage, but subjective entities, mental conceptions of such personages entertained by the chief figure. In this way, Evreinov hopes to concentrate the attention upon the central actor-spectator."¹

A brief study of Evreinov's most striking monodrama, *THE THEATRE OF THE SOUL*, sometimes called *THE GREENROOM OF THE SOUL*, will clarify some of the points summarized by Goldberg. The action of the play passes in the soul within the time limits of half a second! Even though scientists

1 The Drama in Transition. Isaac Goldberg. Pages 440-441

affirm that dreams and other such processes are unbelievably rapid in their duration, the time span of this drama seems ludicrous.

In an unnecessarily long Prologue, the Professor explains that the human soul contains several "Selves", each decidedly different from the other. Therefore, conflict is bound to arise. The setting for the main part of the play represents the interior of the human soul. The action depicts the contention which takes place among the rational, emotional and eternal entities. The struggle is primarily between the rational and emotional entities, M1 and M2, the problem being a dispute as to whether the mind or the impulses will govern human conduct. Each entity seeks to realize his concepts of life as he interprets them and of course, these concepts vary according to the individual entity. That which is beautiful to M2 is repulsive to M1 and vice versa. The encounters terminate in the destruction of M1 by M2, after which M2 is wiped out by the streams of blood from the pierced heart. M3, seeing that the tragedy is completed and the soul is dead, stirs himself to find another resting place for he is the eternal self.

It is understood that the three characters or entities are necessary to the growth of the soul and necessary to each other, even though they are separate. As indicated in the above synopsis, the major conflict is between the intellect and the heart - and the eternal utilizes as experience the struggle between the others.

Even the description of the costumes carries out the

symbolism of the drama. M1's costume is a frock coat. He is the rational character and his garb suggests academic or ecclesiastical association. M2 wears an artist's blouse or smock which reminds one of self-expression and unfettered emotions. The raiment of M3 is well worn and shows signs of travel, for as he is the sublime or eternal self, his clothes convey an impression of hard use and experience.

The outstanding weakness of the play is found in the inertia of M3, the eternal self, during the action. Should not the sublime entity of man be more instrumental in shaping the destiny of the soul? The author leads the reader to believe that he favors the intellect, even though he allows the heart to destroy the intellect at the end of the story, otherwise why does he present the heart's concepts as negative and degrading?

Is further proof needed that Evreinov is wildly Expressionistic? Surely, his plays - particularly the one under discussion - furnish some startling innovations as well as substantial material for thought. If a theatre is a place from which one views drama, then this play by Evreinov is fittingly named. Someone has called Evreinov "A Little Eccentric" but the eccentricity is deep!

Although the writer considers FROM MORN TO MIDNIGHT Georg Kaiser's most interesting play, THE FIRE IN THE OPERA HOUSE has a theme which is rather parallel to one which Eugene O'Neill uses in THE GREAT GOD BROWN. Perhaps "parallel"

is a misleading word for in Kaiser's play one personality is supposed to be merged into another by the deliberate changing of a familiar trinket whereas in *THE GREAT GOD BROWN* Billy Brown gradually puts on the distinguishing features of Dion Anthony through the constant wearing of the latter's mask.

THE FIRE IN THE OPERA HOUSE is concerned with the faithlessness of Sylvette, a young wife. She attends the opera with her lover and a conflagration of the theatre reveals her perfidy to her husband who prefers to recognize her as the king's mistress (who burns to death) rather than his living but fickle wife. The husband even goes so far as to place a ring from the finger of the dead woman on the hand of Sylvette and to announce that his wife has died in the flames. However, Sylvette, in desperation, casts herself into the smoking ruins and perishes. Kaiser injects his customary irony by permitting a hunchback to seize the ring from Sylvette's finger and presenting it to the king, receive the reward which has been offered for the identification of the royal mistress.

This play cannot compare with *FROM MORN TO MIDNIGHT* for sharp brevity and smiting impressionism, but the reader is conscious of an incessant undercurrent which moves inevitably toward disaster - an ending characteristic of Kaiser's work.

Anyone who has read *FROM MORN TO MIDNIGHT* will admit that Kaiser, who calls the piece "A Modern Mystery in

"Seven Scenes" can be a violent Expressionist. The stark impressions the reader receives from the drama are due to a minimum of bold strokes in which the characters, the action and the background are presented. The frequently stilted quality of the text utilizes that jagged, ragged means of expression which is characteristic of the ultra-modernistic school in painting and music. The reader is given the essentials and he must fill in the gaps for himself.

If this play had been written when sub-titles were in vogue, the following caption might have been appended: "From Fetters of Duty to Fetters of Steel." The only glaringly real person in the play is the Cashier who, acting on an impulse, betrays his trust and profession for the casual attention and appeal of a pretty woman, sacrifices respect and domestic tranquillity, and seeks ways of escape to freedom. But, to quote the words of the Cashier himself, "From morn to midnight I am raging in a circle" and his end is no farther than his beginning. The fetters of the law loom on the horizon and the Cashier seeks a final escape in death.

The dialogue is singularly brief, sharp and disconnected, yet each scene in the group of seven contains one long speech, indicating that the author was not able to condense all his material into terse dialogue. As in *THE FIRE IN THE OPERA HOUSE*† (whose one exception is Sylvette) the persons of the drama are types: the Cashier, Lady, Wife, Mother, Stout Gentleman, Muffled Gentleman,

Salvation Army Lass, et cetera, and their very classifications lend them characterization. For this reason, perhaps, the dramatist has not attempted a more elaborate portrayal of them but he has allowed their very fixity of nature to establish them. Furthermore, this rather shadowy presentation of the minor characters make the central motivating figure of the Cashier all the more vivid.

Because the persons and situations of the play are typical, the writer feels that the last scene of the drama is not in keeping with the foregoing parts. In Scene Seven, a Salvation Army lass leads the Cashier to a religious revival meeting and the Cashier, in a frenzy of remorse over the thefts, illicit love, gambling, murder and betrayals which have marked his search for freedom, casts from him the remaining banknotes which he has stolen. Religion is forgotten as penitents, sinners and Salvation Army leaders scramble to grasp the money and the denouement takes an unnecessarily ironic twist when the Salvation Army lass, learning that a large reward has been established for the apprehension of the Cashier, fetches a policeman to arrest him. Undoubtedly, the lass had earned the reward by encouraging the Cashier to confession and repentance, but her betrayal of loyalty to her profession and the Cashier seems dastardly and irrelevant to the story.

The entire episodic sequence of the play reminds one of a series of flashlight pictures when the momentary flare of the ignition reveals a glaring and brief view of the

subject and in the interval between pictures, the outlines of the subject are traced more by instinct than by perception.

Symbolism closes the play when, after the Cashier shoots himself and the lights black out, the Policeman comments, "There must be a short circuit somewhere,"¹ and the futile rotation of the Cashier's life is extinguished.

Plays and playwrights alone did not bring about the revolutionary movement in Expressionistic drama for the efforts of enterprising directors and scenic designers were instrumental in encouraging innovations. After all, the new drama would have had but a flickering life if the artisans of the theatre had failed to meet the new trends.

Gordon Craig has exerted a far-reaching influence upon the mechanics of theatre production for he has among his disciples such originators as Max Reinhardt, whose spectacular drama, *THE MIRACLE*, thrilled thousands of Americans and Europeans; Adolph Appia whose extensive work in lighting has added immeasurably to the artistry of theatric devices; and Georg Fuchs whose three-dimensional scenery and other designs have made possible more practical and effective presentations.

Gordon Craig's arrangements of movable draperies and screens whose color and positions contributed to the atmosphere of plays are familiar to both professional and

amateur designers. He employed symbolism to convey an idea and thus paralleled the objectives of the playwrights.

Max Reinhardt, drawing upon his extensive experience as a director in various experimental and little theatres, was the most dominating figure in the German theatre for many years and his artistic endeavors included all the stagecraft he had learned from Craig as well as from other innovators - particularly the Russians. No device was too difficult to attempt and his unflagging enthusiasm for the latest mechanics offered a wide field for his experimental dramatic offerings. Reinhardt's presentations are often breath-taking in their immensity but few details are lost in the intricacies of production. Surely such a quality is commendable.

Following Reinhardt's dominance in Germany, the seat of Expressionism, came Leopold Jessner who is recognized as a disciple of Reinhardt and an originator in his own behalf. Colors and lights are the media he extensively employs to create and establish moods and his focusing of lights almost speak in their symbolism.

Jurgen Fehling, who produced *MASSSES AND MAN* (a play discussed later in this thesis) by utilizing focused lights on prominent individuals and groups, has turned his attention to the experimental field but he is secondary to Erwin Piscator who, with Fehling, is a more recent innovator in the German theatre and who has been amazingly successful in using films to indicate crowds, off-stage situations, backgrounds, symbolism or mental processes.

This discussion cannot include an elaborate account of the contributions which modern scene designers have made to the drama, for the subject is vast and the topic selected is primarily concerned with play texts. However, comments will be made on unique methods and modes of production as the plays are individually considered in the main part of this thesis.

TIME IS A DREAM

Henri Lenormand

TIME IS A DREAM is the simplest of the plays arranged in a series of scenes which are discussed in this thesis. The play is not long but its six scenes present some interesting theories of time and space, actuality and illusion. Herein is the originality of the drama. The work depends not on music, lights nor unusual sound effects for its appeal, but in spite of its simplicity, the undercurrents of disaster are apprehended.

The past is linked with the present in the first scene when Reimke's clothes are described as having "a hint of old-world coquetry" and Mrs. Beunke is garbed in "the fashion of a by-gone day." Saidyah, the servant and counsellor to Nico, is another link with the past for he represents the Orient from whose lore Nico learned his philosophies of life.

Nico's philosophies appear intermittently throughout the play but his notion of time is strikingly summarized in the words: "Man walks in Time as in a garden; behind him there goes one spreading a veil so that he may not behold the flowers of the past; before him goes one spreading a veil likewise, so that he may not yet behold the flowers of the future. All these flowers, however, bloom at once behind the two veils and the eyes of the initiate contemplate them continually."¹

¹ Chief Contemporary Dramatists. Third Series Thomas H. Dickinson. Page 331.

Nico expands the foregoing idea into actuality and illusion when he says: "It is our minds that have moved across an unmoving dream. Yesterday, today, tomorrow are only words, Saidyah, words which correspond to no reality except within our narrow brains, for beyond our brains there is neither past nor future, nothing but one vast present. Within eternity, we are at once about to be, living and dead.....To die is not to sleep, nor to dream - living is that - trees, earth, fogs and all the rest - they are the inexplicable dream. To die is to awaken, to know, maybe to reach that point in eternity where time is no longer a dream, the frontier where all things are coexistent."

If Saidyah represents the source for the theory that time is co-existent and that reality and illusion cannot be strictly defined, if Nico acts as the medium for the manifestations of these beliefs, does not Romee become the symbol of fulfillment inasmuch as she unwittingly drives Nico towards disaster? Nico says of her, "For a long time I believed that she alone could give me peace of mind and a hold on things - now I wonder if this truth I seek is not at the bottom of the water - right down underneath the marsh."¹

Reinke seems to be a curiously static figure in the story but Mrs. Beunke, the little, fragile, fretful, weary housekeeper is an interesting character. Living, she is, of course, present. But she remembers the Van Eyden estate

1 Chief Contemporary Dramatists. Third Series. Thomas H. Dickinson. Page 331

when the reeds were cut and the nephew of the former owner possessed a green boat and then drowned in the lake. She lives to see the condition of the past repeated in the future but she worries her life away by fussing about trivialities which tire her.

The lake, the reeds and the little green boat are not seen by the reader nor by the audience if the play were to be produced, but these unseen properties are very vivid and they add a surprisingly intent atmosphere to the play. The drama moves in a circle for the fantasy of the first scene, when Romee sees the man and the boat on the lake, becomes the actuality of the last episode when Nico meets his fate. Did Nico await his fate or did fate wait for Nico?

Synopsis of TIME IS A DREAM

Henri Lenormand

Scene 1 The drawing room of the Van Eyden mansion in Holland. Riemke Van Eyden, twenty-five years of age, is awaiting the arrival of her brother, Nico, who is returning home after an extended visit to the Orient. Romee Cremers, a friend and neighbor to Riemke, enters and tells of the hallucination she had while walking to the mansion. She saw a man's head floating in the lake on the Van Eyden estate and after a brief interval, the head disappeared. In spite of her alarm, however, she noted the newly cut reeds and the little green boat. Reimke assures Romee there is no boat on the lake and that the reeds have not been cut during all the years the property has been in the possession of the Van Eydens. During tea, Reinke learns from Mrs. Beunke, the housekeeper, that Mrs. Asbeck, the former owner of the property once had the reeds cut to give a more groomed appearance to the estate and while Reimke is out of the room, greeting her brother, Romee learns from Mrs. Beunke that Mrs. Asbeck's nephew was once saved from drowning when a severe cramp affected him. All this happened thirty years ago. When Nico and his servant, Saidyah, come in, Romee is almost stunned.

Scene 2 The scene is the same as Scene 1. A gloomy day.

Romee and Nico discuss their approaching wedding which is to take place in Java. Conversation turns upon the tropical beauties of the Indies and Nico tells Romee of the theory of life he has learned in the Orient - that human life and destiny are fixed in advance and that nothing can alter inevitability. Nico goes out and Mrs. Beunke enters and tells Romee that Nico has ordered all the reeds by the lake to be cut. Romee, looking from the window, sees the lake as it appeared in her hallucination. When Nico appears, she leads him to talk of the Oriental initiates and their theory that the past, the present and the future are coexistent. She hears, also, that dangers seen in advance by sensitive people cannot be avoided. She is aghast and she confides to Reimke that the face she saw in the water, three months ago, was the face of Nico. She asserts that the landscape is not changing to what it has been in the past but to what it is to be in the future.

Scene 3 The drawing room. Little action takes place. Nico tells Romee more of his uncertainty regarding life and he reveals that once he tried to commit suicide because he was so tortured about the problem of existence. At Romee's horrified conjecture that he tried to drown himself, Nico replies that

he sought death by hanging.

Scene 4 Late evening in the drawing room. Reimke confesses to Romee that she believes Nico to be the victim of a monomania. She also admits her own growing fear for she believes that Romee's vision of the face in the lake has transferred itself to Nico. To prove her belief she shows Romee a letter addressed from Nico to Gelder the ship-builder - a letter in which Nico orders Gelder to send him a green boat which he has selected from several displayed in Gelder's yard. Reimke's fear communicates itself to Romee who realizes her suggestion of the lake as the medium of Nico's attempted suicide, years ago, has placed the idea of water in his mind and she is sending him to his death. Romee tells all to Reimke.

Scene 5 The drawing room. Autumn. Nico is talking with his servant, Saidyah. He concludes his confidences by admitting an early dislike of the water, but as he grew to know Romee better, he found a similarity between the depths of the pools and the shadows in her eyes. He concludes, "For a long time I believed that she alone could give me peace of mind and a hold on things. Now I wonder if this truth I seek is not at the bottom of the water - right down underneath the marsh."¹

1 Chief Contemporary Dramatists. Third Series. Thomas H. Dickinson. Page 331

Scene 6 Reimke is about to leave with Nico to attend a wedding in another city. Romee has instructions from Reimke to send a wire, at the end of thirty-six hours, that their father is ill and Nico must start at once for Java. Romee will meet him in Rotterdam with his luggage and she and Saidyah will accompany him. The plan has been launched by Reimke to avert the disaster which seems to be approaching her brother. Nico must not return to the mansion and the fateful lake. Nico, protesting, goes. Later, as Mrs. Beunke talks uneasily with Romee and Gelder sends a message that he has delivered the boat, Jan the coachman telephones to say that Reimke has been taken ill at the station and he will bring her home. Romee hurries to help her friend and Nico, who has returned from the station by another path, comes in and after a moment, he goes toward the lake. Romee returns and learns from Mrs. Beunke where Nico has gone. She goes to the window, sees the confirmation of her fears and then falls to the floor.

MAN AND THE MASSES

Ernst Toller

The title page of this drama of social revolution in the twentieth century offers the following challenging summary of the themes in the text:

"World Revolution
Bearer of New Forces
The Century is a red glare
Pyres are bloody with guilt
Earth crucifies itself."

Misdirected and violent mass action moves heavily through the play. In contrast to this movement is the futile rebellion of the Woman who seeks to arouse respect for the individuality of man and thus do away with the brutality of mass action.

The seven scenes of the play are called pictures and the alternating scenes are projections of the Woman's mind and they are, therefore, visionary. The stage darkens at the conclusion of each episode and apparently, no curtain is used. The characters are designated by the classes and figures they represent in society and no personal names are given. The terseness and economy of dialogue resemble the strokes of the caricaturist's pencil and it is indicative of the tension which dominates the story. The dialogue is arranged in verse form and frequently falls into the brevity of single staccato words.

The Woman is the essence of rebellion and individuality. In the first picture, her conflict is between wifhood and a career. Like many modern women, she wants both, for she

is tied to her home and she is not brave enough to give up the protection which the position of wife offers. In the third picture the Woman begs that the Revolution be bloodless:

"Factories must be our servants,
Helping to make a richer life
The soul of man must master factories."

But the Masses over-ride her plea by asserting that "Mass is action." In Picture Four the Woman regrets her alliance with the masses when she realizes that they might bring harm to her husband whose features suddenly appear on the face of a prisoner condemned to be shot and her fear leads to the symbolism in Picture Six when the cage of light in which the Woman is held a prisoner is a manifestation of the doubts beyond which she cannot see. In the last episode the Woman's voice is still raised in rebellion for she goes to her death insisting that her voice will live forever - for hers is the quest of the individual seeking an understanding of humanity and protesting against the subjugation and betrayal of the person for the purpose of the Mass.

There are many touches of irony in the drama. In the second scene the bankers decide to hold a charity festival on the floor of the stock-exchange - the medium which breaks the backs and spirits of humanity. The irony is more terrible in the last scene after the Woman has been led away to her execution. Other women prisoners plunder her cell and gather up the little vanities she has left - a mirror, a bit of silk, a comb. As the volley of lethal rifle

fire snaps forth, the prisoners, horrified and ashamed, huddle in the cell. The exponent of individuality pays the price of revolt in the Masses while two members of the mob quarrel over her pitiful belongings.

The masses in this play are not admirable. They seem to be groups who organize simply because they are cowardly individuals who seek power and courage in numbers and not in reason.

In the dream episode where the Handcuffed One, symbolized by the Woman, is imprisoned for the uprising of the people, the Woman accuses God of injustice and immediately, she finds she is both fettered and free. Humanity releases itself from responsibility by placing the blame on God and thus emerges from the light of divine sanction into the darkness of oblivion. The individual is free only when he recognizes his fetters because unlimited freedom results in destruction.

Although the mentally projected scenes are filled with that chaos which is characteristic of phantasmagoria in dreams, the final tragic note in the play is struck in glaring reality. The playwright does not solve the dilemma but closes his work on an echo of hopelessness.

Synopsis of MAN AND THE MASSES

Ernst Toller

Picture 1 The back-room of a workman's tavern. It is the eve of the revolution and the Husband futilely tries to dissuade the Woman from sallying herself as a leader with the Communists. There is the ever recurring problem of the Woman's conflict between wifehood and a career for this particular Woman wants both because she feels that one needs the other.

Picture 2 This is a dream scene and a distorted representation of a stock exchange projected in the mind of the Woman. The Husband is the clerk or recorder of sales and the Bankers are soulless, mercenary persons who are interested in affairs of national and world significance only as they affect the stock market. The scene symbolizes the arbitrary power of the capitalistic class against which the masses seek an overthrow. Into the melee of high finance come the Woman and her Companion. They utter warnings against the money system which sacrifices the welfare of human beings and then they fade away. The Bankers sooth their almost extinct group conscience by planning a charity festival to be held in the interests of the victims in a mine disaster.

The scene closes with the Bankers dancing and singing, "We donate, we dance! Help the unfortunates!"

Picture 3 A great hall. The scene begins with a protest from the Chorus of the Masses against their slavery to machines and toil. Here the Woman pleads as an individual that the Revolution be bloodless but the Nameless One who represents the Masses flays such a proposition, asserting that Mass is great, not weak, and that "Mass is action!" Led by their leader, the Masses cry for destruction and the Woman is forced to admit that in mass there is strength and action and the individual is weak.

Picture 4 A courtyard with a high wall. This episode is another projection in the Woman's mind. The Condemned, with ropes around their necks appear and beg for a last chance to participate in the dance of life. The Companion, in the guise of a guard, enters with the Woman who breaks from him when she sees that the Prisoner condemned to be shot has the face of her Husband. When the face of the Prisoner becomes the face of one of the guards, the Woman realizes that Man is slaying Man and she makes another plea for the individuality of Man. Again the Woman is driven to admit the force of the Mass as symbolized by the guards and with a hopeless

gesture, she places herself next to the Prisoner-Husband-Guard-Man to be executed.

Picture 5 The meeting hall of the Revolutionists. The Revolutionists are facing defeat at the hands of the State. The Woman pleads that force be abandoned for revenge must not be the purpose of Revolution as it will not accomplish the aim of the Mass. She is accused of betrayal because she admits her sphere of existence has been more individualized - even though she has chosen to throw in her lot with the Masses. The soldiers of the State break in and arrest the Woman as the leader of the Revolutionists.

Picture 6 Another dream picture. It takes place against a background described in the text as "boundless space" and a handcuffed person with the face of the Woman is imprisoned in a cage of light. Following the appearance of the Shadows (the men killed in the uprising), the Bankers, and the Prisoners, the Handcuffed One (the Woman) accuses God of injustice and thus removes the blame of guilt from the heart of the individual. To the echo of this accusation by the Prisoners, the Keeper tells the Handcuffed One that she is free. To her surprised query, the Keeper makes the ambiguous answer, "Fettered, freed" and the scene is wiped out as the stage darkens.

Picture 7 A prison cell. The Woman is awaiting execution. The Husband comes with a pledge of faith in her and the intimation that a pardon might be granted. But the Woman repulses all advances of reconciliation when she learns that the Husband's change of attitude is due to the growing favorable opinion of society. To the Nameless One who approaches, the Woman asserts that a leader has no right to sacrifice anyone but himself, that murder will never forward any cause and that the voice of the individual will ever protest the medium of violence and disregard of the individual for the benefit of the Mass. The priest comes and he derides the Woman's discourse on the fundamental goodness of humanity. He forces her at length to admit the church's doctrine that man is fundamentally evil, but the Woman's reiterated "I believe" does not convey the impression that she has faith in such tenets of the church. She is led away to be executed.

THE EMPEROR JONES

Eugene O'Neill

THE EMPEROR JONES is a type of monodrama for, to quote the words of Ashley Dukes: ".....it compels the spectator himself to become an actor in the drama. It is the old test of subjectivity. Unless we are Jones, the drama fails."¹

The inevitability of Jones' destiny is concisely summarized by Louis Goldberg when he says, "The Emperor, not to be slayed except by a silver bullet, is killed by just such a bullet moulded by his credulous vassals. So, too, are we slain by the very belief of others in our own deceptions. Here we have a masterly presentation of the degenerative process of fear."²

Two devices aid immeasurably to the atmosphere of the plot; the intensity of the tom-toms which symbolize the growing panic in Jones and the closing-in effect which the forest assumes when Jones' blind attempts at escape become futile. Scenes 2 through 7 are in the nature of soliloquies, for Jones is the only one who speaks except for the wailing of the galley slaves in Scene 6. It is interesting to note that the first and last scenes are as devoid of fantasy as the intermediate scenes are filled with it.

The hallucination scenes in the forest have various origins. In the second episode, the Little Formless Fears are the faint disturbing doubts which arise when Jones

1 The Youngest Drama. Ashley Dukes. Page 73

2 The Drama in Transition. Louis Goldberg. Page 466

realizes that his plans are awry. Scenes 3 and 4, where Jones encounters the dice-throwing Jeff and the guard of the prison gang, are hallucinations of his guilty conscience which is burdened by deeds from his past. Scenes 5 and 6 symbolize the negro's heritage of slavery and Scene 7, with the Witch-doctor's primitive gestures and commands, represent the sacrifice which Jones must make for the salvation of his race. Here is the negro in his most superstitious and elemental ignorance.

In contrast to the succeeding episodes, Scene 1 is very long but its extensive exposition makes the length necessary. Lem, of whom we hear in the first scene but do not see until the end of the play, should be more prominent at the beginning, for his entrance comes in the nature of a surprise, inasmuch as one has forgotten him. It is interesting to note that in the libretto arranged for the opera of this drama, the crocodile episode and the entire final scene are omitted. Jones, spurred on by the Witch-doctor, kills himself with his silver bullet as his pursuers surround him. Thus he fulfills his own destiny as he confided to Smithers in Scene 1.

The piece is not without its humor, most of which is contained in the first scene and voiced in the duologue between Jones and Smithers. Jones rings a huge dinner bell to summon his escaping followers and offers the trader such bits of philosophy: "Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does. For de little

stealin' dey gits you in jail soon or late. For de big stealin' dey makes you Emperor and puts you in de Hall of Fame when you croak."¹

Again, Jones observes: "It don't git me nothin' to do missionary work for the Baptist Church. I'se after de coin, an' I lays my Jesus on de shelf for de time bein'."² Jones combines humor with bravado when he decides to "re-sign" as Emperor and pulling a Panama hat from beneath his scarlet throne, he elects to leave the palace as he entered it - through the front door.

THE EMPEROR JONES as a title for this drama, is intriguing for it is a cognomen which might apply to anything from a prize bull terrier to the chief of a bootleg gang, and a new acquaintance of the play is interested to find an ex-pullman porter as the usurping ruler of an undesignated island in the West Indies. Smithers utters the concluding lines in the play and pays Jones an envious tribute when he says: "Gawd blimey, but yer died in the 'eighth o' style, any'ow!"

Synopsis of THE EMPEROR JONES

Eugene O'Neill

Scene 1 The audience chamber in the palace of the Emperor. Smithers the trader learns from an old colored woman that the Emperor is asleep and that all the staff and soldiers of the palace have fled to the hills to plot the death of Jones. The woman escapes the room and Jones comes in. Realizing that the Emperor is unconscious of the plots against him, Smithers grows bold and attempts to intimidate Jones for he has helped the ex-Pullman porter to the position of power he now holds and he has kept quiet about a break from jail which Jones made in the States. But Jones turns the tables on Smithers by reminding Smithers he has repaid the trader for his help and he is not unaware that Smithers, too, has served in jail. Jones exults in his power over the negroes and reveals that he can be killed by a silver bullet, only, and as he carries one for good luck, he will kill himself with it rather than be captured. Learning from Smithers that his followers have deserted him, Jones decides to "resign" as Emperor, immediately. He has plenty of money, he can follow the trails in the forest with his eyes shut and arrive at the other side of the island where a French gunboat will take him to Martinique. He has made

plans for this attempt to overthrow him and he has five lead bullets "good enuff fo' common bush niggers" and after that he has "de silver bullet left to cheat 'em out o' gettin' me." As the threatening beat of the tom-toms rolls from the hills, Jones bids farewell to Smithers and goes.

Scene 2 The edge of the Great Forest. This scene, like the following episodes, is practically a soliloquy and it begins with Jones' arrival, tired but still confident, at the rim of the forest. As he rests himself, the awful immobility of the woods dawns upon him and when he looks beneath several large stones for the food he has placed there in anticipation of this predicament, the caches cannot be found. Then the Little Formless Fears appear and when Jones fires at them, the report of the shot is the signal for the hastened beat of the tom-toms. Jones thrusts his way into the forest.

Scene 3 Another place in the forest. A small clearing encompassed by the forbidding trees and underbrush. Jeff, a negro, is seen. Mechanically, he shakes dice and throws them to the ground. Jones appears, giving thanks for the rising moon which will light his way. He hears a clicking sound and discerns Jeff, playing. Bewildered, but believing he has

found someone he knows, Jones approaches the phantom but as Jeff plays on, fear possesses the fugitive and whipping out his revolver, he fires at the vanishing figure.

Scene 4 The forest. A narrow dirt road is visible. Jones appears, exhausted. His uniform is ragged. As he talks reassuringly to himself, a gang of negro prisoners enters, accompanied by a guard. To the lash of the officer's whip, the men start to work on the road. Jones rises and goes through the motions of shovelling until the guard's whip on his shoulders urges Jones to raise his arms as though to strike. Realizing he is without any implement, he pleads for a shovel and failing to obtain one, he sends a bullet directly in the guard's face. The forest closes in on the phantom figures and Jones leaps again into the obscurity of the trees.

Scene 5 A circular clearing rimmed by the inevitable trees. A stump in the centre resembles an auction block. Jones, almost at the end of his endurance, enters. In silent pantomime, people dressed in the costumes of the 1850's appear. An auctioneer arrives and sells men and women to the highest bidders. He taps Jones on the shoulder and the negro leaps in fright to the auction block. He witnesses his own auction in dumb show. Then,

turning on his captor, and in rebellion at the bondage of servitude, he fires two bullets - one at the auctioneer and the other at a figure who impersonates a planter. Again, the forest shuts down and Jones, mad with terror, rushes away.

Scene 6 Another clearing in the forest. The low-hung branches give the effect of a dark hold in a vessel. Jones crawls in. He has only his silver bullet left. Wailing voices are heard and negro figures are discerned, swaying back and forth as though they were rowing a galley ship at sea. In spite of himself, Jones joins them and his wail rises with theirs as the tom-toms beat nearer.

Scene 7 Beside a river. Jones appears. A witch-doctor, coming from behind a tree, pantomimes that Jones must sacrifice himself and going to the river bank, the conjurer calls from the stream a giant crocodile which fastens itself upon the bank and regards Jones with a menacing eye. Jones, in agonized repentance, crawls near. Suddenly, he remembers his silver bullet and he fires it directly into the green eyes of the monster which disappears as the Witch-doctor goes behind a tree. Jones is left without any resource of protection as the tom-toms sound nearer.

Scene 8 Dawn. The setting is the same as Scene 2. The tom-toms are loud. Lem, the leader of the

rebellious soldiers, appears with Smithers. Lem is confident that Jones is beaten. At a sound from the forest, the soldiers enter it. A minute later, there is a volley of rifle-fire and the tom-toms, for the first time since the end of Scene 1, cease their onimous beating. Lem tells Smithers that the silver bullets they spent the night in making have killed the erst-while Emperor. The body of Jones is brought from the forest and laid at the feet of Lem.

THE ADDING MACHINE

Elmer Rice

According to Walter Prichard Eaton, the objective of this play in seven scenes is ".....to project in a new way the soul of one of the world's vulgar and pathetic nonentities."¹

Ashley Dukes declares, ".....Zero on earth is a figure finely imagined and at the same time, for all his subjectivity and expressionism, a figure of awful and shattering reality."²

The latter statement is decidedly true of this drama. Zero is as imposing in appearance as the number which is his name. Mrs. Zero is the kind of woman who makes murderers out of otherwise harmless husbands. Daisy, whose full name is Daisy Diana Dorothea Devore, is not the ex-movie queen her name would lead one to believe but ~~is~~ an impossibly ugly, stupid and frustrated woman who pitifully defends her unattractiveness and loneliness by calling herself "refined." The guests who call upon the Zeros are dressed alike and their conversation plods along the dented lines of the weather, operations, symptoms of disease, the business depression and half-audible off-color stories. Shrdlu's name suggests the incongruous combination of letters which a printing machine records when it is not properly operated and Judy O'Grady's tag name needs no

1 The Drama in English. Walter Prichard Eaton

2 The Youngest Drama. Ashley Dukes. Page 137

explanation.

The combinations of reality and fantasy in the play are effectively contrasted. In Scene 2 Zero's reaction to his dismissal from the office is presented in a nightmare motion when the desks and stools revolve increasingly faster, the mechanical music of a merry-go-round is heard, all the noise and sound effects used in a modern theatre are fused to create a deafening confusion and the Boss mouths such disjointed expressions as "....old employee... efficiency....economy...". A terrific peal of thunder symbolizes something freed in Zero and a flash of red is the medium of his impulse to kill which is followed by darkness.

In Scene 4, when Zero makes his plea to the unhearing jurors, the whole meagre life of a nonentity is laid bare in all its economic and spiritual starvation. After pronouncing their verdict, the jurors march from the room in the double lines which suggest columns of figures and Zero continues to talk to the empty jury-box as the scene closes.

The graveyard scene is not without its grim humor for Zero asking for a cigarette, receives from Shrdlu one of the Camel brand and when swatting the mosquitoes which pester him, he remarks, "They oughta put a shot of citronella in that embalmin' fluid."

The Elysian Fields, as Mr. Rice presents them, are happy realms. The music of life can be heard by those who will listen for it and these uplifting lyrics are part of a place where marriage is not necessary for the sanction of

love and where Dean Swift and Abbe Rabelai enjoy popularity! Membership is restricted and one must be a murderer or a suicide to qualify. All hide-bound Baptist tenets are disregarded in the casual atmosphere of the place and Zero is shocked to the core of his middle-class soul when he learns that the dwellers in this ideal spot paint pictures, sing or just look at the sky all day long.

The play begins and ends in frustration. The picture of the repair shop in Heaven is a different place from the hospitals of souls which have been presented in other conceptions of divine havens. Zero finds he is a perpetual cog in the wheel of life and in reincarnation, he goes on to more enslavement on a different plane. He has been a failure from the beginning for he has been, in turn, a monkey, a slave who hauled stones for the Pyramids, a Roman galley slave and a serf. He has never amounted to anything - he never will accomplish anything - so he must go back to the squalor, the cramped sordid living conditions, the unrequited labor of the drudge and equip himself for an eternal work that lays its foundations in lies, the thwarting of ambition and a hatred of sunlight and beauty. His soul will be used over and over again, he is told. The play ends on an ironic note when Zero runs in pursuit of lovely Hope who leads such nonentities to barren goals while Charles and Jo jeer at the hallucination.

Who are Charles and Jo? Merely repair men of heaven who are not held to any Union hours, and who drain their

pocket flasks while one of them says, "Hell, I'll tell the world this is a lousy job."

Synopsis of THE ADDING MACHINE

Elmer Rice

Scene 1 A bedroom. Mr. Zero is in bed and says nothing during the scene. Mrs. Zero keeps up a steady stream of whining talk. Her subjects range from the movies and her resentment because she cannot see the premieres down town to vitriolic comments on the woman across the way who was arrested for indecency. Mrs. Zero's nagging of her husband, because he has failed to obtain a higher salary or position after adding up columns of figures in the same office for twenty-five years, is paralleled by her resentment of her enslavement to the stove, the dust-pan and the dish-pan. The harangue continues until the curtain falls.

Scene 2 An office in a department store. Zero and Daisy Devore are checking figures. As they work, they snap at each other, for they are wearied to death of the office routine. Much of the scene is taken up with their innermost thoughts which are expressed aloud but not heard by the other. Daisy's audible thoughts range from suicide to the thrills of passion as presented in the movies and Zero's cogitations dwell on his wife and her nagging and his contemplated interview with the Boss when he asks for a promotion in recognition of twenty-five

years of faithful service. When the whistle blows and Daisy rushes from the office, the Boss comes in and detains Zero. The result of the encounter is the announcement that Zero is to be replaced by an adding machine and so he is no longer needed. Zero kills his Boss.

Scene 3 The dining room of Zero's home. Zero is late and upon his appearance, Mrs. Zero begins her usual tirade against him. The bell rings to announce the arrival of the guests who are coming to spend the evening. After frantically clearing away the dinner dishes, the guests are admitted. They are six men and six women whose names are One, Two, Three, et cetera. Zero does not speak. The guests arrange themselves in two circles - the women in one and the men in the other. The conversation is painfully platitudinous but it drags along until the doorbell rings again and a policeman enters. Zero breaks his silence and showing a blood-stained collar, he announces he is the man wanted. As he goes out with the officer, Zero tells his wife that he has killed his Boss.

Scene 4 A court of justice. The jury includes the Messrs. One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six and their wives. The jurors pay no attention as Zero defends himself in a long impassioned speech in which he tells of his frustrations, disappointments and justifications for killing his employer. The

jurors rise and pronounce Zero guilty. Then they quit the room.

Scene 5 A graveyard in full moonlight. Judy O'Grady and a young man enter the cemetery and seeing a new headstone, Judy reads the inscription and learns that Zero is buried there. Judy is the girl who lived opposite Zero until his wife had her arrested on grounds of immoral conduct. After Judy and her companion leave the graveyard, Zero steps from his grave and meets Shrdlu, another dead man who confesses to the murder of his mother and his apprehension of the call to judgment. He expects everlasting flames for he is acutely aware of his sinful nature. The dead friends talk until another head rears itself from a grave and flinging a skull in protest, begs for quiet in order to sleep.

Scene 6 The Elysian Fields. They are everything that the mind can conceive for pastoral beauty. Shrdlu and Zero meet again, the latter is impressed with his surroundings but Shrdlu is disappointed because he has not been consigned to the eternal flames he expected. Daisy appears. When she and Zero are alone they confess their love for each other which they had covered by nagging and criticism when they were mortals. Daisy admits that she committed suicide because she could not live without Zero. When Shrdlu returns, the lovers find there are

few ministers in this favored spot and that marriage is not necessary. Zero is shocked and he makes a hasty exit from the place for even Daisy's pleas cannot hold him and she, despondent, wishes she were alive again.

Scene 7 An office similar to the one in Scene 2. Zero is operating an adding machine with mechanical precision. Lieutenant Charles and Jo enter and order Zero to stop his work for he must return to earth and begin all over again. To his dismay, Zero learns he has been in a kind of hospital for souls and that the life to which he is to return will be no easier than his former existence although he will operate a machine of such perfection that the mere pressing of a lever with the great toe of his right foot will perform the machine's function. In vain Zero pleads to remain where he is but as Charles and Jo order him away, he sees in the distance what appears to be a lovely girl and he runs off to capture her while Charles and Jo ridicule him because he has glimpsed elusive Hope.

DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

Eugene O'Neill

The year 1850 and a New England farmhouse are the time and locale of DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS. An innovation in this play, and a device which Mr. O'Neill uses effectively, is the cross-sectional scenery. Both the exterior and the interior of the Cabot house are shown. The porch, the path and the gate are visible. The lower left room in the set is the kitchen and the lower right apartment is the parlor. Upstairs are two bedrooms. When the action of the play takes place in one or more of these cubicle-like sections, they are lighted and the rooms or area not in use are left dark. This arrangement of the set allows for the presentation of simultaneous action and it permits a more rapid change of scene. This innovation is not original with Mr. O'Neill but he uses it extensively in DYNAMO, occasionally in LAZARUS LAUGHED and once in MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA.

Another distinguishing characteristic of this play is the faint attempt at a trilogy. The drama is divided into three parts, each with a sequence of scenes but each part is in itself a rather complete unit. At the conclusion of Part 1, Abbie has taken possession of the farmhouse and Eben's attraction to her is evident. The second part terminates with Eben's yielding to Abbie and Part 3 accomplishes the destruction of Abbie's child, Eben's betrayal of her to the law, Ephraim's isolation and the arraignment of Abbie and Eben for murder.

The play is filled with irony, sordidness and negative human character. Although it has its inception in Greek tragedy, it is divested of the redeeming beauty which gave a kind of elation to the early drama. Occasionally, in order to remind himself, perhaps, as well as his readers, that the ideal and quest of beauty are the motivations for much of his story, Mr. O'Neill pauses in his heavy handling of sordid reality to permit Eben or Abbie to admire a sunset or dawn. Eben and Abbie display this appreciation of nature only when they are not absorbed in each other and thus, their contemplation of natural beauty seems irrelevant and artificial.

The dramatist has endowed the play with considerable atmosphere and the reader is drawn, in spite of himself, by the inevitability of destiny. Old Ephraim almost challenges one's pity when he observes, after learning of Abbie's faithlessness, "God's hard and lonesome." In the foreword, the playwright prepares for the atmosphere he wishes to establish when he says: "Two enormous elms are on each side of the house. They bend their trailing branches down over the roof. They appear to protect and at the same time to subdue. There is a sinister maternity in their aspect, a crushing, jealous absorption. They have developed from their intimate contact with the life of man in the house an appalling humaneness. They brood oppressively....."

To the writer, the ending of the play contains a serious technical fault. When the Sheriff and his men arrive at

the farmhouse to arrest Abbie, they do not go up to the bedroom to look at the child she has murdered. Only Eben's accusation and Ephraim's blunt instruction that both Abbie and Eben be taken into custody, give the representatives of the law grounds for the conviction. Perhaps, in legal idiom, the question is moot.

Synopsis of DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

Eugene O'Neill

- Scene 1 Exterior of the Cabot farmhouse. Little action but considerable exposition takes place. Peter and Simeon, sons of Ephraim Cabot, return from work in the fields as their step-brother, Eben, calls them to supper. Peter and Simeon are eager to go westward in search of gold instead of operating the farm for their father who rode away, two months ago, for an unannounced destination.
- Scene 2 The farmhouse kitchen and part of the yard. The sons talk of old Cabot's meanness and eccentricity. Eben, who has a strange kinship with his dead mother, accuses the brothers of being unkind to her because their failure to lighten her heavy chores drove her to her death. Followed by his brother's taunts, Eben goes off to visit Minnie, the Scarlet Woman of the district.
- Scene 3 Late the same night. Eben returns home and tells his brother their father has married again. The brothers are resentful that their work on the farm will benefit their new step-mother. Reminding Peter and Simeon that the farm had belonged to his mother, Eben offers to pay each of them three hundred dollars for their shares if they want to go West. The brothers learn that Eben has been told by his mother of the place where Ephraim

hoards his money. The brothers decide to wait and see their new stepmother.

Scene 4 The same as Scene 2. Peter and Simeon refuse to do any work on the farm now that their father has married. When they see Ephraim approaching the farm with his bride, they pack their bags, and sell their claims on the farm to Eben. Passing Ephraim and his wife at the gate, they cast insults and taunts at the couple and depart, singing, for the West. Abbie, the bride, immediately takes possession of the place and enters the kitchen to win Eben's favor. Eben, against his will, half yields to her fascination but angrily leaves her to join his father.

Part 2

Scene 1 Exterior of the farmhouse as in Part 1, Scene 1. Two months later. Eben is attracted to Abbie, but he resents her power and they quarrel. Abbie, stung because Eben resists her and Ephraim intends to leave the farm to Eben, tells her husband that Eben had been making advances to her, but alarmed at Ephraim's rage, she admits she has exaggerated the circumstances. Learning that a son would mean much to Ephraim, Abbie promises him one.

Scene 2 The two bedrooms. Ephraim tries to tell Abbie how lonesome he has always been. Hurt at Abbie's lack of comprehension, he goes to the barn to look over

his cattle. Abbie enters Eben's room and although Eben does not resist her advances, he orders her out. She announces she is going to open the parlor, the room which has not been opened since Eben's mother died.

Scene 3 The parlor. Abbie has lighted the candles and she awaits Eben. When he comes in, she leads him to talk of his mother, and assuring him that his mother would want him to love Abbie in order to revenge old Ephraim, Eben yields to his stepmother.

Scene 4 Dawn. Outside the farmhouse. Abbie bids Eben a lingering goodbye as he starts to work. Old Ephraim, returning from the barn, is surprised at Eben's high spirits.

Part 3

The kitchen and two bedrooms are shown. An evening in the spring of the following year. A hilarious party is in progress, celebrating the birth of Abbie's baby. Ephraim is happy and excited but his guests whisper disparaging remarks behind his back and under the cover of the music, for they are not ignorant of the paternity of the child. Upstairs, Abbie joins Eben in his father's bedroom and adoringly, they gaze at the child in the cradle.

Scene 2 Outside the house. A few minutes later. Eben is fighting his conflicting emotions. Meeting Ephraim, he hatefully announces the farm is his property, but Ephraim declares he will not inherit

the farm because the son of his union with Abbie will be the heir. Abbie wanted a son to insure the property to her interests and she has told Ephraim of Eben's advances toward her. Eben's rage mounts to white heat and he fights his father. Abbie intercedes and after her husband has entered the house, Eben confronts her with her brazen scheme and Abbie cannot persuade him that the plan was made when she was jealous of Eben's indifference to her. Eben threatens to depart for California and he admits he would not censure Abbie so harshly if he were sure she cared more for him than for the baby.

Scene 2 Cabot's bedroom and the kitchen are shown. Dawn has not come. Cabot is sleeping and Abbie stands over the cradle. Then she goes down to the kitchen where Eben is seated, his carpet bag beside him. Abbie tells Eben she has killed the baby and now he can love her as he did before the baby came. Eben is petrified with horror. He repulses Abbie, declaring he loved the child. Then he rushes out to tell the Sheriff of the crime.

Scene 4 An hour later. Cabot awakens and comes to the kitchen in search of breakfast. Abbie tells him she has murdered the baby and after Cabot's return from a frenzied rush upstairs, she tells him that the child is Eben's. Eben comes in and flinging

himself at Abbie's knees, he pours out his love for her. He has summoned the Sheriff but he rushed home to share the guilt with her. Abbie is deliriously happy that Eben has returned to her and when the Sheriff and his men appear, Ephraim orders the officers to take both Abbie and Eben. After a last declaration of love for each other, the lovers are led away.

MIMA

David Belasco

Adapted from THE RED MILL by Ferenc Molnar

MIMA is a morality play in three acts and many scenes. Its background is in Hell where cylinders in the floor and walls allow the flaming hell-fires to rush forth in eerie patterns when the discs are raised. Red and black are the startling key colors of the setting.

The story is concerned with the attempt of an inventor to defy the inherent goodness in every human creature by submitting a victim to a soul-corrupting machine which is guaranteed to send the most virtuous God-made man to the lowest depths of human depravity within an hour. The test is not a success for the shining particle of goodness finally bungles the damning machine and Janos, the victim, is triumphant over the devils' scheming because he has the divine power of forgiveness and mercy.

Satan is an interesting character - as always. Although he is present throughout the play, he never speaks and his comments and orders are issued through an adjunct who is either the power behind the throne or a devil blessed with clairvoyance. Satan's face, as described in the text, is different from the usual conception of it. The Satanic Majesty of MIMA has a white, drawn face, lined with suffering and his eyes reflect all the misery and sadness of the world. Quite a contrast to the evil, leering countenance so often associated with the Potentate of Hell!

The mannikens are embodied souls which have come to the haven of devils and they are parts of the soul-corrupting machine, being directed by electrical currents and rays to weep, laugh and act. They are named according to type or position - Croupier, Cocotte, Old Gambler et cetera. Their voices are supposed to be presented by means of vocal records from a machine suspended above the laboratory and operated by assistants to Magister. Mima is the beautiful manniken with the two hearts ~~who is~~ ^{and} the motivating agent of Janson's destructive progress. Under the influence of the rays, she can be anything from an angel to a woman of the streets. Sometimes, particularly at the end of the play, unless the right electrical power is maintained, Mima yields to her better impulses. This influence is not approved by Magister for the lady is a product of Hell and she should act accordingly!

If MIMA is supposed to be a play of symbolism, it falls short of its purpose for its aims are obvious and there is little to distinguish it except the unusual characterization of Satan and the puppet-motivation of the embodied human people. For a play with its peculiar locale, the occasional unrelated localizations are scarcely appropriate. Allusions to God, even when taken in blasphemy, are as painful to Satan and his followers as counter allusions ~~on~~ ^{to} Hell are offensive to an upright and God-fearing Christian. The reading of the play grows monotonous for much material could be eliminated. ~~As is~~ ^{is} typical of most of Belasco's plays, there is unnecessary emphasis and proportion placed on

scenes which symbolize moral abasement and disintegration.

However, the divine spark which God has supposedly placed in every human being is victorious over the final temptations of Hell and the author or authors have brought in all the offstage noises which could convince the reader or playgoer that good has overcome evil. But the pealing church bells and sentimental organ music are not sufficiently convincing to shatter Hell nor adequately ethereal to elevate man.

Synopsis of MIMA

Davis Belasco

Part 1

The laboratory of Magister, inventor of the Red Mill. Satan and his followers arrive to witness a demonstration of the Red Mill, an invention in which a good man can be totally corrupted within an hour. Magister explains the machine to His Satanic Majesty and then orders a group of the mannikens to be used in the machine to pass in review. Following them comes Mima, a beautiful woman manniken with two hearts. One heart is stirred toward noble impulses - the other is wholly bad. Thus, she is a changeling creature. With the aid of a telescope and a small screen, Magister and Rubicante, an assistant, search the earth for a man to use as an experiment in the new machine. Finally, Janos, an apparently faithful and devoted forester and husband, is selected and Magister dispatches devils to capture him. A brief intermission is declared while Jsnos is brought to Hell.

Part 2

Scene 1 Magister issues final orders to his assistants as Janos, almost petrified with fright, is brought into the laboratory. His character and reactions are approved and he is prepared for the ordeal of corruption. The Red Mill, black and sinister against a red background, is lighted. In the following

scenes, as Janos yields to the temptations thrust upon him, a signal bell rings.

Scene 2 Janos stands outside a jeweler's shop, coveting an emerald ring and wondering how he can find the money with which to purchase it.

Scene 3 Bewildered and against his will, Janos wins a fortune at the gaming tables. The mannikens seen in Part 1 are used in this episode.

Scene 4 The interior and exterior of Mima's boudoir. Janos stands outside, his hands stuffed with money. Mima, coveting the money, lures Janos and he succumbs to her charms. The Husband comes in and is furious at the state of affairs. Mima intrigues Janos to admit that the money belongs to Alfons (a manniken in the role of a complicating character). Janos engages in a duel with the Husband and he is slightly wounded.

Scene 5 A room. Mima's husband has thrown her out and she comes to Janos for protection. Alfons influences Janos to enter a financial scheme for making a quick fortune. The voices of a crowd outside are heard in cheers as Janos is nominated as a candidate for Parliament.

Scene 6 A room overlooking a garden. Mima is granted a divorce. Her passion for jewels and money force Janos to continue his activities in unscrupulous political and financial careers which he wishes

to discard. He listens in terror as his control of the stock market brings results which will end in the deaths and starvation of hundreds of people. The devils dress Mima for her wedding to Janos. Even the appearance of Janos' wife, who is to bear a baby, causes only a brief conflict between the good and bad hearts with which Mima is equipped. She is supremely callous and the scenery opens to reveal a church with Alfons waiting as best man. Mima and Janos pass into the sanctuary.

Part 3

Scene 1 An intermission has taken place and Satan returns with his followers. Six months are supposed to have elapsed.

Scene 2 A gambling resort on the shore of the Great Sulphur Sea. Janos is a fugitive from the law because of his iron mine swindle. Mima and Alfons plan that he will take her to a cabaret where she can dance for the rich patrons who will seek her favors. Then Janos can appear as the outraged and black-mailing husband. When Janos expresses unwillingness to enter such a dastardly scheme, Mima, flirting with Alfons, goes off with him.

Scene 3 A private room in a cabaret. Alfons reviews the favors for Mima's company and decides upon a prince. Janos comes in as an unwilling and ashamed accessory to the scheme and Alfons hides him. Mima and the prince enter and after the prince has

poured out his heart to her, they go off to his hotel. In reality, the lights are blotted out and the remainder of the scene takes place in the darkness. Presumably, Janos arrives at the prince's suite and threatens exposure and disgrace.

Scene 4 The garret bedroom of Mima. Mima and Alfons (who is concealed) await the coming of Janos with the blackmail money. When Janos appears, he rejects the love Mima offers him. He feigns a stupor and prevents the plan of Mima and Alfons to kill him and escape with the booty. He buys Mima's freedom by giving Alfons the money and then turns his attention to killing Mima whose pleading for mercy cannot move him. Finally, she produces a letter sent by Janos' mother to his wife on earth. The letter expresses the love which the mother holds for the wife because Janos loves her so dearly. As the word "you" is used in the note, its contents seem to apply to Mima as well as to Janos' wife. Mima reminds Janos of his mother's mercy and this brings about Janos' forgiveness of Mima. This is not the turn of affairs anticipated by the operators of the machine and twice, they order Mima to repeat the scene which ends the same way. All the efforts of Magister are in vain. Music is heard from the earth as Rubicante appears with the announcement that the machines are stalled. The

mechanics are unable to control the mill which begins to flame and break up. Satan and his followers flee in terror before the revolution in their domain. Janos takes a fond farewell of the still sweet and penitent Mima - for he remembers that only an hour has passed since he left his home and he must return. Mima's entreaties are powerless to dissuade him and he departs while Mima drops, ruined, and Magister mourns over his beautiful manniken.

The last scene

Janos' house at the edge of the forest. Janos is on the bench outside. His wife calls him to supper and even her gentle insistence and chiding cannot convince him that he has dreamed for as he follows her into the house, his heart and lips are murmuring Mima's name.

OF THEE I SING

George Kaufman - Morrie Ryskind

OF THEE I SING, a musical and political farce with a scene sequence in two parts, is the Pulitzer Prize drama selection for 1931-32. For the most part, the script divorced from the music is amusing but the inclusion of the songs and choruses add to the effectiveness of the production. Ira and George Gershwin are responsible for the lyrics which reflect the frolicsome mood of the plot. The foibles of politics and politicians are often but thinly veiled, and although the reader may deplore the burlesque presentation of high government officials, the buffoonery is sometimes justifiable.

The subjects of satire are not confined to one group. Witness poor Throttlebottom whose insignificance is so obscure that even the person who nominated him as a candidate for Vice-President cannot recall his name when campaign plans are in the process of formation. Later, the campaign leaders advise Throttlebottom to get into training for the Vice-Presidency by going into hiding - so Throttlebottom returns to his old life as a hermit. After the inaugural, Throttlebottom passes through the President's study with a sight-seeing group, the members of which ask the usual inane questions of the guide. Throttlebottom learns from the guide that the Vice-President should preside over the Senate and he hastens to the Senate chamber to claim his official position.

The Senate is the target for considerable satire. The most hilarious incident is the medium for ridicule on that body's propensity to procrastination and pettishness. The Senator from Massachusetts arises to protest at the oversight of the Senate in giving due recognition to Jenny, the horse which Paul Revere rode on the night of his memorable summons, whereupon the Senate rises for one minute in tribute to the departed horse from Massachusetts. In the same scene, the roll call and other official activities are carried on to the accompaniment of music and the Senators are the songmakers, concluding with a song in honor of Wintergreen's heir, "Posterity Is Just Around the Corner."

Political campaigns do not escape the authors' attention. In Scene 1 the campaign songs are a medley of all the campaign ditties of recent years and the major song shows the usual magnanimous deference to the usual solicited votes:

"He's the man the people choose -
Loves the Irish and the Jews."

The party's candidates are amusingly alike and lacking in distinction, and the slogans and mottoes on their banners are parodies:

"Vote for Prosperity and see what you get."

"Wintergreen - the flavor lasts."

"A vote for Wintergreen is a vote for Wintergreen."

"Turn the Reformers out."

Election Night furnishes an opportunity to present popular idols and the psychology of the crowds who vote for the occasion and not the candidate. Returns are flashed

on a screen before the populace. Wintergreen is always in the lead but he is trailed by Jefferson Davis, Culbertson, Lenz, Mickey Mouse, Gloria Swanson's First Husband, Walter Hampden, Mae West, King George, Queen Mary and Mussolini. Between the balloting announcements, pictures are thrown on the silver sheet to retain the interest of the crowd. The likenesses range from John Wintergreen, Mary Turner, George Washington, the White House and Benjamin Franklin to Primo Carnera, Man O'War, the Marx Brothers and Roxy.

Bathing beauty contests do not elude witticisms for Miss White House, the girl who is to campaign with John Wintergreen on a platform of love and put love into the White House, is conducted with the usual mock-modest and inane procedure, but the heart of the great American public beats true when Mary Turner's corn muffins are favored over Southern pulchritude.

Diplomatic practices are not impartially handled for the French Ambassador, who protests at the snubbing of the lovely Diana Devereaux because she is of French descent, threatens serious consequences when he asserts that his country must have reparation because France has been deprived of a baby through Wintergreen's marriage with Mary Turner. Frequent but far from subtle allusions are made to the propensity of the same people for sending innumerable notes and other minutiae of diplomatic intricacy.

OF THEE I SING is not great drama for its timeliness is detrimental to its longevity. However, it is good fun, although as an ironical mirror, it gives an occasionally startling reflection of truth.

Synopsis of OF THEE I SING

George Kaufman - Morrie Ryskind

Act 1

Scene 1 A brief pantomime in which a political procession, bearing placards and banners, endorses John P. Wintergreen for President. The background is any city in America with a typical skyline of church spires, skyscrapers and, to use the words of the text ".....and almost certainly, speakeasies."

Scene 2 An hotel room - the headquarters of the National Campaign Committee. Francis X. Gilhooley and Louis Lippman are engaged in an active campaign of reading newspapers, smoking and drinking what appears to be White Rock. Wintergreen and Senators Carver Jones and Robert Lyons from the West and South, respectively, come in. The entrance of an insignificant person by the name of Throttlebottom who turns out to be the forgotten Vice-Presidential candidate is no damper on the plans of the others. In a brainwave of enthusiasm they decide to campaign on a platform of love and a beauty contest whose winner will be known as "Miss White House" and the prospective First Lady.

Scene 3 A section of the boardwalk at Atlantic City. The candidates for the title of Miss White House are assembled in the usual bathing suits while they pose for the usual photographers. Diana Deveaux, a beauty who has adopted a Southern accent and atmosphere, is endorsed by Senator Lyons, but

to the consternation of the Committee and the entrants, Wintergreen selects Mary Turner, a secretary, as Miss White House because she can make good corn muffins. The committee, sampling the corn muffins which Mary has thoughtfully placed in her desk, agree, and to Mary Turner goes the honor of recognition as the next First Lady.

Scene 4 Madison Square Garden is the scene of a typical blustering, boisterous and blaring political rally. When Wintergreen and Mary arrive, the people, in an outburst of frenzied demonstration, approve the betrothal of the presidential Candidate and his lady who pledge themselves as party supporters on the platform of love.

Scene 5 Election Night. Crowds are roaring, bands are playing and photographs of John Wintergreen and Mary are everywhere. Over the din can be heard the frequent announcements of the election returns. Various pictures are thrown on the screen to keep the crowd interested. Of course, John Wintergreen is the people's choice and his picture with Mary's finally flickers on the screen.

Scene 6 Wintergreen is about to be inaugurated as President. As the exercises proceed, Diana Devereaux, the forgotten beauty, impedes the progress of the celebration by declaring she has been illegally barred from election as Miss White House. The judges of the Supreme Court are appealed to and they rule

out the petition.

Act 2

Scene 1 The office of the President and his wife in the White House. This scene is one of prolonged activity and is followed by the appearance of John and Mary who occupy themselves with routine duties. (See the discussion of the text). The French Ambassador is admitted and he protests against the snubbing of "The Beautiful Rose of the Southland", formerly recognized as Diana Devereaux and now claimed as of French descent. Wintergreen refuses to give up his Mary, the Ambassador threatens dire consequences and Wintergreen, refusing to resign, faces impeachment.

Scene 2 A corridor in the Capitol. Throttlebottom is approached by lobbyists who tell him he is about to become President because Wintergreen will be impeached. Wintergreen, meeting Throttlebottom, coaches him on his presidential duties, concluding that as President he must make a speech only when he wants the stock market to go down.

Scene 3 The Senate Chamber. The usual Senate procedure takes place and it includes everything from unfinished business to attempts at filibustering. Throttlebottom is enthroned as Presiding Officer. As Wintergreen, entering, faces charges for refusing to resign and making a breach of promise with Diana, Mary enters with the announcement that



the proceedings must halt for Wintergreen is to become a father. The Senate is hilarious and the French Ambassador leads the protesting Diana from the scene.

Scene 4 A corridor in the White House. This scene holds little but conjectures about the baby's arrival and another visit from the French Ambassador who insists his country demands a payment because France has been deprived of a baby. His petitions are refused by Wintergreen.

Scene 5 The Yellow Room in the White House. Senators, Diplomats, Judges, secretaries and flunkies are awaiting the arrival of Wintergreen's baby. The French Ambassador arrives to sever diplomatic relations but as he delivers his notification, Wintergreen hears he is father to a boy. In the midst of congratulations, another announcement is made and Wintergreen is declared father to a girl. Double felicitations are showered on him in honor of his twins. Still protesting, the French Ambassador is pacified with the promise that Throttlebottom will wed Diana. Throttlebottom is delighted, and as for Diana, one man is as good as another to her!

TREAD THE GREEN GRASS

Paul Green

To quote the author, TREAD THE GREEN GRASS is "A Folk Fantasy in Two Parts With Interludes, Dumb-Show and Cinema." In addition to these means of presentation, the author suggests that masks be used when possible. The title of the play is found in the words of a song which Tina chants in Scene 2 of Part 2:

"Tread, tread the green grass, dust, dust, dust.
Come all ye pretty maids and walk along with me."

Although fantasy is a prominent medium of presentation in this play, words of realism echo in the imagination, atmosphere and dreams of its expression. Surely, Young Davie is the personification of youthful Will O' the Wisp fancies - for consider the reactions of the people who watch him as he proceeds to jail. Boys follow him in hooting choruses. Old men glance at him rather sheepishly and then utter invectives against him. Young girls are restless and they hug their guilty secrets as they watch Young Davie go by - for the Devil is familiar to everyone and every person treats him in accordance to his individual reaction to sin. The older people recognize the devil because he has been attractive to them in their youth - otherwise, they would fail to recognize him, now. To Tina, the dreaming adolescent, Davie is beautiful and she responds to him with an intensity that becomes an idolotrous love.

Who are the Old Man and the Old Woman? Opinⁿ may vary

on this point, but they, too, are evil sprites, but because they are old and withered they are repulsive. They are no more wicked than Davie whom they fostered, but they are sin as viewed through the eyes of age and Davie is attractive because he is glorified by his youth.

The green light which heralds the approaches of the Old Man and the Old Woman throughout the play, is the symbol of the dream interludes of the story. It prefaces their first appearance to Tina as she lay asleep, their approach to the house on the cliff, their entrance into the church and the prologue to that distorted nightmare scene in which the Young Reverend is crucified.

For the most part, the Young Reverend is presented as a passive figure who is too easily abashed or too apathetic to exert an active influence. Perhaps such criticism is over harsh for the young disciple of the gospel seems a separate part of the scene and watches over the action like a brooding Christ.

The utilization of the cinema is an interesting innovation for its function is more extensive than in other plays where it has been used. It permits the presentation of simultaneous happenings; that is, the preparation of the brethren and the Bassels for their ride to the church, the incidents which occur en route there, the sick people who remain at home by their firesides, Young Davie as he makes his way to the jail and his subsequent escape.

Occasionally, the reader detects lack of clearness in the setting for the author does not always indicate when

the cinema is in use. In the first scene of Part 2, the text states that the action is conducted mostly in pantomime. Whether it is dumb-show or the utilization of the cinema is a difficult question to decide. As both the exterior and interior of the church are shown, it seems almost necessary to use the screen, yet the set may be so constructed that a cross-section of the church and its environs is presented - an arrangement frequently demanded in the plays of Eugene O'Neill. The final scene of the play is likewise indefinite regarding its manner of presentation. However, it is plausible that the mock crucifixion and its accompanying action are shown on the screen and the action reverts to the stage with the pursuit and momentary capture of Young Davie.

The drama leaves one with a forlorn feeling that the following of the Will O' the Wisp is always disastrous and that affinity with the pagan spirit of the out-of-doors must be avoided. However, the barbarous exhortations and attempts to bring Tina to repentance at the mercy seat in the country church are neither appealing nor godly. The final scene of the play is at once a moral and artistic culmination for as Tina is led away in the protection of her family and neighbors, the sun comes up and the face of the sun is Davie's face with his inevitable and damning smile.

Synopsis of TREAD THE GREEN GRASS

Paul Green

Part 1

- Scene 1 Tina escapes from the farmhouse and crouches in the flowers. She falls asleep and an Old Man and an Old Woman, repulsively aged and dirty, lead her in a dream toward the hills. The voices of Father Bassel, Mother Bassel and young Harvey are heard and the old couple leave Tina who drops to the ground again in sleep. When Tina's parents and Harvey arrive, they believe her to be dead but she awakens to tell them of her dream.
- Scene 2 Woods and a house on the edge of a cliff. Tina approaches the house and in answer to her knock, Young Davie appears. He sings a song and slams the door in Tina's face. The Old Man and the Old Woman run in, pursued by villagers who remain until Davie appears from the house and disperses them. Tina joins the old people and Davie in a dance and song to the pagan spirit of the woods until the Young Reverend comes. Then, frightened by Davie's revilement of the minister, Tina runs away, followed by Davie and the Young Reverend.
- Scene 3 Tina's home, the farmhouse. Little happens in this scene but a presentation of Harvey's devotion to Tina and his genuine desire to pull her from the queer mood in which she indulges most of the

time. Tina resents Harvey's attempts to force her attention from herself and his threats of harm to the evil one who seems to have bewitched her. She rises to help her mother prepare supper for the preachers who are expected.

Scene 4 The scene is the same as before with the Bassels, the preachers and the Young Reverend at the supper table. Brother Cadars and the other brethren try in vain to bring Tina to "The light and grace of God." Tina exhibits an almost pagan delight in the view from the window and when Young Davie appears and ridicules the prayers of the brethren, Tina becomes infected with his diabolical gayety and they cavort around the room until Harvey appears with a gun. Davie is marched away to jail, the Young Reverend, who has taken no part in the scene, goes out, and Tina rushes away to be alone. The stage directions are not explicit but here begins, apparently, the cinema which is used until the conclusion of Part 1. Tina is grief-stricken on her bed. The Bassels prepare themselves for church. The brethren, still chanting prayers in thanksgiving for the capture of the evil one, climb into their carriage. The young Reverend joins the preachers and as the two conveyances leave the yard, Tina rushed from the house and joins her parents.

Inter-
lude

Evidently the cinema continues in this episode which is devoid of dialogue. The progress of the brethren and the Bassels toward the church is seen. Arriving at the church grounds, the preachers mingle with the crowd and wear their piety rather ostentatiously. Flashes of people at home and along the road are shown and the interest finally centers on Davie who, with Harvey and two armed guards, proceeds steadily toward the jail. Still singing, Davie enters his cell and Harvey returns to his lonely fireside, but when he is alone, Davie flings open his barred window and frees himself.

Part 2

Scene 1 The church. The brethren and the congregation are present when the Bassels and Tina enter. Tina is led to the mercy seat but her repentance is not made for Young Davie comes in and Tina swoons. The brethren are unable to arouse her but Young Davie approaches the girl and revives her. The young people follow Tina and Davie from the church in abandoned dancing. The brethren and the elders are powerless to halt the wanton merry-makers from leaving the building. The parents bewail the actions of their children as they follow Davie and Tina into the woods.

Inter-
lude

The cinema continues. A mad search for the runaways is in progress. Armed men stalk the countryside to capture the elusive sprite of evil. Davie

and Tina return to the deserted church, set fire to it and then escape again into the woods. The flames attract the farmers to the site and dejectedly, they watch the smouldering embers.

Scene 2 The little house and the cliff overlooking the village. Davie and Tina come from the house and the girl speaks in exquisite poetical fervor of her love for Davie who answers in derisive laughter and runs from her into the forest. The Young Reverend tries to comfort Tina and after he has gone, Davie appears again, like a monkey in the trees as he swings from one branch to another. Then another dream-like episode takes place. Tina sees her little brother who died by following the Will O' the Wisp and as she slasps him to her, Mother Goose rushes by and bears the child away. Davie returns in the guise of Jack-muh-Lantern. To the tune of a sinner's hymn, Tina is whipped by dwarf-like people until the Young Reverend appears. A distorted scene takes place. The Young Reverend is crucified as Christ with Davie acting as a Roman soldier, Brother Cadgers as the nail-driver and the dwarfs as the Jewish rabble. Tina sobs and the scene vanishes.

Tina is seated on the ground when Davie comes from the woods and rushes into the house, pursued by Harvey and other men. They capture him and bring him out but he eludes them and makes his escape by

leaping from the cliff, and running across the field, unharmed. As the brethren raise their prayers over Tina and Harvey renews his threats to kill Davie, the sun comes up and the face of the sun wears Davie's smile.

THE GREEN PASTURES

Marc Connelly

To write of THE GREEN PASTURES and keep one's criticism based on the printed text is a difficult task for the person who has witnessed a performance of the drama. The text is forgotten as vivid scenes and impressive incidents crowd themselves in indelible pictures. The superlatives one cherishes for party wear must be brought forth and used in all their shining power to do justice to a play which transcends mere theatrical presentation and becomes a spiritual experience.

The drama, which is divided into two parts with ten and eight scenes, respectively, is labelled a fable and the innovation here is a matter of idiom for it is an interpretation of the rise and fall of man as viewed by the plantation negro of the old South. The piece was suggested by stories from Roark Bradford's collection, OL' MAN ADAM AN' HIS CHIL-LUN. However, anyone who has read Mr. Bradford's chronicles and then read or attended a performance of Mr. Connelly's play cannot deny that the characterization and undertones of spiritual significance in THE GREEN PASTURES far surpass the source which was the inspiration for the drama.

Because "the dramatic rule is suddenly, 'Each in His Own Tongue'",¹ THE GREEN PASTURES is not alone in its religious expression of a group of people. In recent years, NOE, a story of Noah in modern middle-class French idiom

¹ Esther W. Bates

made an impressive appearance in France, although few echoes of it were heard in this country except by dramatic columnists. In contrast to THE GREEN PASTURES, NOE, by Andre Obey, does not depend upon musical accompaniment for in the former play, the Heavenly Choir and its renditions of negro music is an indispensable part to the effectiveness of the drama.

Nor does NOE cover as extensive a period of time as THE GREEN PASTURES which spans the centuries between the Creation and the Crucifixion with little preparation for the latter epoch except in the theme of forgiveness which is the keynote to the second half of the drama. NOE is more unified than Mr. Connelly's play for it is concerned with a single episode - the construction, voyage and the final landing of the ark. M. Obey's Noah is a simple peasant who rests with his animals as they sleep with their heads upon their paws. Mr. Connelly's Noah is a humble negro preacher who needs a little "likker" to fortify himself against the terrifying onslaught of the flood and the occasional justified querulousness of his "ol' lady." The French Noah is a figure of lonely spirituality for his only communication with his God is through the simple childlike prayers which he sends heavenwards, whereas the American Noah is a good man in a wicked world but God manifests himself as a natural man often enough to give needed counsel.

A final contrast between the two Noahs is found at the end of their respective voyages. The Noah of THE GREEN PASTURES leaves the ark with the animals, the sprouts, his

wife and his sons to help in the creation of a new world and its people under the benign sanction of the Lord. The Noah of the French drama steps upon an earth awaiting the ministrations of the human survivors of the flood, but his sons and their companions, liberated once more, hurry off to their own interests, leaving Noah, old and alone, but still sending up simple credulous petitions to his unseen God whose divine approval shines forth in an exquisite rainbow.

The wide appeal which THE GREEN PASTURES has made can be explained by pointing to a few of the human touches in the play. The observer notes with interest that all the angels in the Pre-Creation Heaven enjoy straight hair. To quote the expression of the writer's maid, their hair has been "de-kinked." God, when ordering Cain to brace up and make a man of himself, remarks, "Dey ain't nothin' to make a man fo'git his troubles like raisin' a family" and again, before he descends to visit the earth, the Lord cautions Gabriel, his right hand "yes-man" of Heaven, "Well, take keer o' yo'self. I'll be back Saddy." A charmingly homely touch is noted when the angels who clean God's office wear calico protectors over their wings to keep them spotless.

Undoubtedly, the most gripping scene in the play is the entrance of the Israelites into the Land of Canaan as God, in comforting tenderness, leads the aged Moses toward the Promised Land he has prepared for his faithful follower.

This episode is described in detail in Part 2, Scene 4 of the synopsis.

The ending of the play is more significant in the text than on the stage - for God sits in his arm chair in Heaven listening to mankind as it crucifies his son. The concluding words of the play seem to be deliberately blurred in an attempt, perhaps, to refrain from antagonizing the Hebrew people. In the writer's opinion, the last scene of the play seems somewhat irrelevant for the only allusion to the Christ occurs in this bitter episode which, however, is the consummation of forgiveness.

In the general enthusiastic acclaim accorded THE GREEN PASTURES there have been one or two dissenting voices, although the dissension does not seem to have made a dent serious ^{enough} to deter the continued run of the play.

Mr. R. Dana Skinner insists that THE GREEN PASTURES lacks solemn grandeur and "some of the scenes have a spurious simplicity forced upon them, a feeling which is not simple at all but under the surface appearance highly complex and mentally exacting-.....It is the boy brought up in the slums who imagines every rich man's house to be a marble and gold palace.....The majesty and panoply of the throne are much more in keeping with the dreams of the naive and the humble.....THE GREEN PASTURES impresses one.....as being written by a playwright who undoubtedly has a deep respect for but does not share the essential qualities of the child-like faith of the Negro people of the deep South."¹

¹ Our Changing Theatre. R. Dana Skinner. Pages 158-159.

Mr. Skinner comes very close to calling Mr. Connelly magnanimous for his artlessness. This seems a rather left handed opinion for it implies a certain insincerity or technical fault. It is true that the negro people endow great persons and supernatural beings with the trappings of pomp and grandeur, but when Mr. Connelly states that he presents the religious beliefs of the Negro of the "deep South", he is concerned with a group of people whose simple life is paralleled by their naive conceptions of the supernatural. There is no less reverence for this human viewpoint but rather, the Deity becomes greater and more personal to the most humble worshipper. Furthermore, the negro spirituals, which are the lyric expressions of these people, make their Jesus and saints very human and accessible creatures. Can anyone deny the democracy of "Walkin' 'Round Jerusalem, Jus' Like John", the simple expectancy of "Goin' Home" from "The New World Symphony," or the intimate fellowship of "When the Saints Come Marchin' In"?

Mr. Connelly invests Pharoah with all the trappings of his position, even to the delightful banners on the walls which proclaim that the palace is "The Home Chapter of the Daughters of Pharoah" and "The Mystic Brothers of the Egyptian Home Guard, Ladies' Auxiliary, No. 1." Does not the author rightly interpret the faith of the negro people when he presents the Deity as a Being who is above worldly embellishments and thus offers the lowliest black man an

opportunity to share in a spiritual kingdom?

Is it essential that a critic attempt to alloy a writer's own viewpoint with the expression of his art? Do not the dictates of literary criticism permit an artist to divorce his own opinion from his medium, provided his work is convincing according to its background and objective?

It is natural that attendance at a performance of THE GREEN PASTURES makes an immediate and rather overwhelming appeal to the emotions. Perhaps Mr. Skinner checked his emotion at the door, and equipped with his intellect, only, he was able to delve into the fabric of the drama and find debatable points where no problems were intended, anyway.

Synopsis of THE GREEN PASTURES

Part 1

Scene 1 A corner in a negro church. Mr. Deshee's Sunday School class listens to his his reading of the Old Testament. When he allows them to ask questions, they bring up the points which usually perplex children; why some Bible characters lived for hundreds of years, what the angels do, how the earth was made and what God looks like. Mr. Deshee answers all their questions, even saying that in Heaven a fish-fry is probably a weekly event and boiled custard is enjoyed with it. As for angels - they just fly around until they get wing-weary. Mr. Deshee believes that God must have resembled the Reverend Dubois because Mr. Dubois was the finest looking man Mr. Deshee knew. As the teacher's voice begins a review of the day's lesson, the lights fade and introduce the story he is telling.

Scene 2 A fish-fry in a Pre-Creation Heaven. That delight of the negro heart, a fish-fry, is in progress. As part of the festivities, a Sunday School class receives certificates, an arch-angel makes his dignified appearance and Gabriel enters to announce, "Gangway! Gangway for de Lawd God Jehovah!" God, in the person of an impressive,

genial negro preacher enters and after catechising his flock, orders the fish-fry to proceed. He moves among his people, passes a miracle to make more firmament for the boiled custard and then commands a place to drain off the excess firmament - valleys, mountains, bayous, rivers, earth and sun. Then, as the air grows dark and the chorus sings "Hallelujah", there is a roll of thunder and God makes man.

Scene 3 A garden. God comes down to find his new man, Adam, testing his strength. God gives Adam instructions and then brings about the creation of Eve. God tells his first man and woman to enjoy themselves and care for the garden but to leave the forbidden fruit tree alone. God leaves and as the choir sings "Turn You Round", Adam and Eve approach the forbidden tree and the lights go down. In the darkness Mr. Deshee's voice is heard, quizzing the children about the departure of Adam and Eve from the garden and the birth of Cain and Abel.

Scene 4 A roadside. Cain is standing over the dead body of Abel. God appears and advises Cain to get out of the county, settle down, marry and bring up a family.

Scene 5 Cain is walking on a concealed treadmill. A panorama of trees and shrubbery passes. A sign

reads "Nod Parish, County Line" and Cain stops. He meets a girl, flashily dressed and boldly pretty, and he goes home with her to beg her family's boarder. God watches them out of sight, but he is not pleased.

Scene 6 God's private office in Heaven. Gabriel is in conference with the Lord regarding the routine matters in Heaven. He reminds God of the prayers from mankind and God, recollecting that he has not been on earth for three or four hundred years, decides to visit it.

Scene 7 God walks along a country road which is the same treadmill used in Scene 5. He meets people who are violating his Sabbath Day - Zeba, a hoydenish flapper whose boy-friend turns out to be Cain the Sixth and a group of boys who seem to be praying but who, on closer inspection, are seen to be shooting crap. A group of Black-eyed Susans with children's voices is a welcome sight for they smile at God and thank him for inquiring about them. Finally, God meets Noah, the country preacher and a good man, who, discouraged by the evil in his parish, welcomes the kindly appreciation of God and invites him into his home for a chicken dinner.

Scene 8 The interior of Noah's house. Noah tells God of his discouragement of the wickedness in human

beings. To a roar of thunder, God makes himself known to Noah who is humble before him. Then God makes plans for an ark that Noah is to build, the animals he is to put into it, the rain which will come and the destruction of land which will follow.

Scene 9 The ark under construction on a hillside. People stand below, ridiculing Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth as they work. The rain begins. Noah and his boys rush to put the last touches on the ark and drive the animals aboard. The rain soon falls heavily and the stage darkens as the choir sings.

Scene 10 The ark rides the flood. A dove is sent forth and returning with some greenery, Noah knows the waters are receding and he makes plans. The boat stops. The waters go down. Green hillsides are seen. Noah gives thanks to God and in answer to his prayer, God appears on the deck. He instructs Noah to let out the animals and plant the sprouts that have been preserved in the ark. As Noah hastens away, God commands the liberated birds to build and nest again and the air is vibrant with their songs. Summoning Gabriel, God calls his attention to the change and then God realizes what a big project he has undertaken and he hopes the new era will be good.

Part 2

Scene 1 God's office in Heaven. The cleaning women are brushing up the office and, woman-like, wishing they could gold-plate it and make it fine. In the distance, thunderbolts are being hurled to earth for God is angry at mankind and is punishing his people. God, discouraged, comes in with Gabriel. With sudden inspiration, he orders Gabriel to "put dem bolts back in the boxes" and he sends for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God tells the patriarchs of his scheme for leading their people from bondage to a new land he will give them. Isaac suggests the Land of Canaan as the sits and his great-great-great-great grandson, Moses, as the leader.

Scene 2 The opening of a cave. God appears to Moses and tells him of the plan to lead the Children of Isreal away from the cruelty of Pharoah and the Egyptians. Moses is awed but not afraid and asks if his brother Aaron can help him. God is willing and Aaron is summoned. Then God reveals to the brothers some of the "tricks" by which they can gain their way into the audience chamber of Pharoah who is partial to "tricksters".

Scene 3 The throne room of Pharoah's court. The decorations and banners suggest a negro lodge room. In the midst of an exhibition by Pharoah's

magicians, Moses and Aaron force their way to Pharoah's throne and by demonstrating tricks, they try to exact a promise for the freedom of the Hebrews. But Pharoah is a "trickster", too, and he does not keep his part of the bargain. Pharoah blasphemes the God of the Hebrews. Moses and Aaron bring about a smiting of the eldest sons of Egypt and when Pharoah's own child is brought to him, dead, he, in terror gives the word for freeing the Hebrews.

Scene 4 Forty years later. The Children of Israel are marching on the treadmill. The procession halts as Moses, now an old man, becomes too feeble to go on. The Promised Land is ahead and scouts enter with the news that the city of Jericho is just across the river. Moses appoints Joshua as leader and then he gives Joshua a few last directions for capturing the city before sundown. Moses orders the procession to go on for God has told him he cannot enter the Promised Land because he once broke the commandments. Singing and giving thanks, the line of marchers moves out of sight and as the long rays of the setting sun creep toward Moses, God appears to comfort him. He tells the old man he has a Promised Land waiting for him and as he leads Moses slowly up a hillside, Moses is worried that God is with him instead of with his people. As God assures the

old man that he is with the Children of Isreal, too, a long triumphant call from a trumpet announces that the Hebrews have taken the city and entered the land God has given them. Slowly, Moses goes up the mountain with his Lord, murmuring trustfully, "You did it, Lawd. You've taken it. Listen to de chillun' - dey's in de Land of Canaan at last! You's de only God dey ever was, ain't you, Lawd?"

Scene 5 A room resembling a negro night club. The King of Babylon and his guests are indulging in cheap talk and dancing. The King orders the slaying of a prophet who enters to remonstrate at the King's evil ways and then he attempts to placate the God of the Hebrews by giving a bag of money to his High Priest who begins a hypocritical prayer to God. A bang of thunder and a rush of darkness bring on God who, with his back turned toward the audience and light pouring over him, charges the terrified merrymakers with a betrayal of all the trust and goodness he has given them. In words winging with scorn and bitterness, God renounces his people and is sorry he made them.

Scene 6 The office in Heaven. God, deaf to the pleas of the patriarchs who intercede for his mercy toward the people he has renounced, listens to Gabriel as he speaks of Hosea. Every time Hosea passes

the door, God hears a voice like a prayer from the earth. Finally, unable to refuse anyone who asks for mercy, God resolves to go to the earth - but he makes no promises to help.

Scene 7 A corner beside the walls of the temple in Jerusalem. Hezdrel is preparing to protect the temple and its books against the attack of Herod. God appears and learns that all people have not forsaken him because Hosea, the prophet of mercy, had learned forgiveness through suffering and people believe that God is now a God of mercy and not a God of wrath and vengeance only. When God learns that Hezdrel's valor will protect the books which contain the accounts of faith, God is proud and happy and he goes away, promising Hezdrel that the God of Hosea will be waiting for the warriors. God's concluding words are, "Thanks.... fo' tellin' me so much. You see, I been so far far away, I guess I was jest way behin' de times."

Scene 8 Heaven. A fish-fry is in progress but the angelic hosts are quiet because God, seated in his arm-chair, seems lost in thought. Gabriel comes in and attracted by God's seriousness, tries to offer comfort but God has a message for Gabriel for he realizes that the message of Hosea was proved by suffering so God, too, must learn the same way. A voice is heard from the earth - the voice

of a person who is about to witness the crucifixion. God murmurs, "yes." He is going to suffer more. Understanding and light come into his face and the scene closes with the singing of "Hallelujah, King Jesus" by the heavenly choir.

R. U. R.
(ROSSUM'S UNIVERSAL ROBOTS)

Karel Capek

The plays previously discussed have been arranged in scene sequence, although every play is distinguished from the others by its individual originality. The selections which follow are more diversified in structure and their themes and expression are varied.

R. U. R. (ROSSUM'S UNIVERSAL ROBOTS) is termed "A fantastic melodrama" by its author, Karel Capek. Its arrangement in three acts and an epilogue is not unusual, but its subject matter is arresting in the mechanized world of today and it savors of sensationalism. The time is the future and the locale an island. This dramatic representative of Czech literature has added the word "robot" to the language and the incredulous reader who demands proof of its imitation can journey to the nearest experimental electrical laboratory and witness for himself the production of a mechanical man.

Briefly, the story is concerned with the growing power of mechanical men, their revolution and overthrow of their makers. This theme is becoming increasingly familiar and the innovation of this drama is becoming dimmer. However, the text includes some rather startling allusions and coincidences, among them the forecast of the prevalent use of robots with resulting unemployment until poverty is abolished and man can devote himself to perfecting himself.

The latter thought is rather fanciful, considering the original curse which God put on Adam and Eve!

The scientists in R. U. R. loftily concede that God's human machine is too complicated and that a modern engineer could do a much neater piece of work ^{or} God works on outmoded plans. Rossum's Universal Robots (named after their originator) can be trained for any work and they retain whatever is said to them. They are ordered by thousands for factory and army use. Biologically, there are no males nor females among them - some are made to appear as men and some as women, simply because the world is accustomed to women as house servants and stenographers.

Professor Chandler offers a penetrating observation when he states: "If we consider our working men as mere machines and strive to make them so, they will some day wreck revenge upon those who abuse them. What constitutes civilization is not its machinery but rather, its human value."¹

This statement recalls another play, THE INSECT WORLD, by Karel Capek and his brother Joseph. In this play, the authors have found a medium for satirical interpretation of human nature as well as for economic motives and effects, for the consideration of, if not the solution of such problems, seem to interest these innovators. In THE INSECT WORLD human characteristics and actions are seen in terms of the insects. Butterflies are the gossipers and philanderers of insect society, beetles are avaricious hoarders

1 Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler P.454

and ants are the burden-bearers - mere units in an organization where mass accomplishments are spurred on by efficiency experts and promoters. Human appetites of greed and lust, human practices in politics and economics, human organization and direction of individual and group enterprises are satirically presented in the life of the insects.

To return to R. U. R. - the weakness in the play lies in the reader's ignorance of how Dr. Gall supplied his last experimental robots with souls. It is true that by equipping them with pain nerves he gave his mechanical men sensitivity, but the reader feels slighted in not having this point made clear. The writer has a faint recollection of attending a performance of this play, during college days, and a reflection persists that Helena's kindness to her library robot, Radius, aroused a feeling of love in him and thus, his soul was born. However, the printed text does not bear out this theory for in the epilogue, Radius is as hard and unyielding as his followers.

Whatever the reaction to this play, and in spite of its appearance at the beginning of the last decade, it is timely, for mankind is now threatened with spiritual and economic annihilation if the machines of the world continue their terrifying advance.

Synopsis of R. U. R.

Act 1 The central office of Rossum's Universal Robots.

Helena Glory, the daughter of the president of the company, comes to visit the island factory in the interests of the Humanity League which aims to secure better treatment for the robots. The manager, Harry Domin, tells her much regarding the robots - their obedience, precision, intelligence, low cost and ability to do all kinds of work quickly. Helena is disturbed that these men do not possess souls. From the officers of the company, who are specialists and engineers seeking to perfect the products of the factory, Helena learns that an effort is being made to develop greater brain and nerve power so that the robots will become sensitive to pain and not unthinkingly injure themselves at the machines. While the scientists prepare luncheon, Domin asks Helena to marry him and after some hesitation, she acquiesces.

Act 2 Helena's drawing room, ten years later. Helena learns that Radius, an intelligent robot which Helena has put in charge of her library, has had a convulsion peculiar to robots and he should be sent to the stamping machine, ground up and remade. Domin comes in and calls Helena's attention to a present he has for her - a gunboat in the harbor.

Although Helena scents trouble, Domin deprecates such an idea. After he is summoned to his office, Helena reads the newspapers and finds that all over the world robot armies are overpowering human beings. She fetches some manuscripts from Domin's room and burns them. Then she sends for Dr. Gall, who is the head of the Physiological and Experimental Department and tells him that Radius, who has become unusually intelligent through studying in her library, must not be sent to the stamping machine. Dr. Gall agrees, although he says that Radius, who resembles a human more closely than any robot to date, is not wholly a success. Helena pleads that the robots be given souls and Dr. Gall infers that Radius almost has one - judging from his behaviour and the fact that robots are becoming sensitive to pain. Dr. Gall tells Helena he has made a robotess named after her. Word comes that a cargo of handbills has been delivered to robots all over the world, urging them to rise and slay their enemy - mankind. As the factory whistle bursts into prolonged blowing, the men realize it is the signal for a robot uprising and hastily, they prepare their defense.

Act 3 The scene is the same as before. Preparations are still under way to establish a barricade. Domin looks toward the harbor and sees that the gun-boat

with the ironical name of "Ultimas" has been seized by robots and trained her guns on the house. The men decide to negotiate with the robots in terms of money. Busman, the business manager goes out to barter with the leader Radius, but he approaches too closely the protecting charged wire and is electrocuted. Domin suggests that they bargain with the robots that they (the humans) will escape on the gun-boat and in return, they will give the robots the formula which old Rossum and his son made for their manufacture. Helena confesses she burned the formula because no more children were being born and human beings were not needed for work.

The shock of an explosion and the extinguishing of the lights indicate that the robot army has taken possession of the power house. A last desperate defense is made but Radius and his followers appear and kill Hallemeier, the psychologist, and then they proceed to other parts of the house where repeated revolver shots testify to the slaughter of the other human beings. Only Alquist, the head of the Works department is spared, for Radius decrees that he will work for, build for and serve the robots.

Epilogue One year later. A laboratory in the factory of Rossum's Universal Robots. Alquist is in despair

because he cannot find the secret of life as the robots ordered. They cannot reproduce themselves. Alquist, in terror, realizes he is getting too old to work on the research any longer. A committee, headed by Radius, threatens death to Alquist unless he finds the secret of manufacturing robots because the machines are at a standstill for need of operators, and although the seven seas have been sailed in an effort to locate human beings, the search was futile. Radius orders the old scientist to experiment on live robots but Alquist refuses in horror. Primus and Helena, the robotess who Dr. Gall tried to make like the human Helena, come in. They are strangely attracted to each other - they are tender and there is poetry in the air because they are together. Hearing them laugh, Alquist detects a human note in their voices. Learning that they were the newest of Gall's experiments, the old man decides to dissect Helena as an experiment, but Primus interferes. When Alquist orders Primus to submit, Helena becomes terror-stricken and threatens destruction of herself if Primus is used. The young robots tell Alquist they were made for each other and then the human scientist realizes that the secret of life will be born of these two. Dr. Gall's last experiment was a success. He had obeyed the human Helena's plea for robots with

souls and they had become human, even to the division into sexes.

GOAT SONG

Franz Werfel

The Theatre Guild, under whose auspices GOAT SONG was first produced, labelled the play "An extravaganza in five acts." The reader notes that the five act arrangement, while not in prevalent use today, cannot be the innovation, so he rightly surmises that the text furnishes the individuality of the drama. The play combines the natural and the supernatural in an unusual way, for the dominating power of the story, a Nameless One - half goat and half man - is never seen although he is omnipresent.

Two questions confront the person seeking an interpretation of this symbolic story. Who is the Nameless One and how is he represented to the various characters of the play?

Professor Chandler comes very near the first problem when he states: "One critic believes that the monster is the physical in man, the primitive, sylvan, joy-loving nature, rendered evil by puritanic repression accorded it by the parents. They have been ashamed of the offspring of their natural love, and, by confining the goat-man and regarding him as monstrous, they have made him so."¹

To Stevan and his wife, the terror was a dark secret which twisted and warped their lives out of all proportion to natural laws. Juvan, the scholar and iconoclast, sets the monster up as a half-god and attempts to center

1. Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler P.434

all the superstitious beliefs and fears of the people in a false deity. Bogoboj is a sorcerer or seer and the link between things occult and material. He is a foil for the uncompromising intellectual element which Juvan represents. It is Bogoboj who reveals a motivating element of the story when he tells his daughter, Kruna, of the goat-like monsters who, living on goatsmilk and herding roe and goats, dwell high on the mountains beyond the haunts of men, and, coming down, ride the plains and ledges on moonlight nights. Sometimes, they love a mortal and leave children as "outposts in many places." Bogoboj hears in the wind the song of the goats.

Undoubtedly, the Nameless One causes discord between Stevan and his wife, its escape brings about revolution, intrigue and sex attraction between Juvan and Stanja. To summarize, perhaps the Nameless One can be characterized as the fundamental bestial urge in the human race - the urge which is at once the destruction and propagation of humanity. Regarding Juvan and Stanja, the Nameless One is the symbol of their attraction to each other and only after the supposed annihilation of the monster did love in its finest form come to them. But almost immediately, after that recognition, when the mother of the creature laments that no trace of the son she bore will be left in the world, comes Stanja's startling reply, "You are wrong, Mother. He is still in the world. I am carrying his child."

In another play, JUAREZ AND MAXIMILIAN, Franz Werfel

again introduces an unseen character as a powerful influence in the drama. JUAREZ AND MAXIMILIAN is less sensational than GOAT SONG and omits the supernatural element of the latter work.

JUAREZ AND MAXIMILIAN is a dramatic history in three Phases which are really acts, and thirteen Pictures which might be termed as scenes. The thirteenth Picture is the Epilogue. The play is laid at the time of the Second Empire in Mexico, in the 1860s. Its theme is the conflict between Juarez, the Republican President, and Maximilian, the Austrian Hapsburg Duke, who is established as Emperor of Mexico. The almost unbelievable attitude of Juarez and Maximilian toward each other is one of the most striking notes in any historical incident. Mutual respect and affection exist, although personally, they never meet.

The artistic triumph of the play is in the power of Juarez who never appears. We hear about him, we come to know him, we feel his compelling power, but Juarez as a character does not exist in the *Dramatis Personae*. Maximilian, a condemned idealist, is one of the most lovable figures encountered in historical drama and Franz Werfel has achieved distinction in making an Austrian nobleman so vivid against a Mexican background. The characterizations in this play are unusually and brilliantly executed and the impetuosity of the Mexican temperament is a flashing note among the more restrained qualities of the drama.

Synopsis of COAT SONG

Act 1 The farm kitchen of Gospodar Steven Millic's house. The families of Mirko Millic and Stanja Vesilic are drinking the health and happiness of the newly betrothed couple. When Mirko and Stanja are alone, he teases her to learn if she has loved another and she answers that once she dreamed of a scholar who visited her family. She is curious to know about a kennel-like house which is near the farmhouse. Mirko answers that he has always been told to hurry by the place but he knew not why. Later, when Stevan and Mirko's mother come in, they, in fear and loathing, discuss the monstrosity which is their child imprisoned in the kennel-shaped house. They have never told Mirko about it and they dare not die because they must guard the creature - even though they themselves have not looked upon the monster which is their son. The Physician comes in and goes out to visit the kennel. When he returns, he refuses Stevan's plea to poison the creature and after the medical man has gone, Stevan turns to the story of Abraham and Isaac as chronicled in the Bible - and then he decides to act accordingly. Taking his gun and deaf to the entreaties of his wife, Stevan summons the servant Babka, the only person who visits the creature in the kennel, and goes out. The mother waits in agony for a shot

that does not come, for Stevan and Babka return with the frightening announcement that the Physician could not have locked the door behind him - as the creature has gone!

Act 2 The Council Room. The Council awaits the arrival of its leader, Stevan Millic. Three men are to be heard. They represent the hundreds who return to seek a claim to the lands from which the Turks had driven them. The spokesmen are an odd trio - one is an American, another is Teiterlik, a tumbler, and the third is Feiwei, a Jew. As the clock strikes the hour, the hearing begins but it is arrested by the entrance of Stevan, half-crazed with horror. Learning of the men's mission, he accuses them as he would any malicious deformed creatures and orders them and their followers out of the country by the next day. He is beside himself with passion and fear and the Elders are aghast as Stevan commands the clerk to sign an order, causing any immigrants disobedient to his ruling to be flogged. Babka, appearing with the announcement that she has not found the escaped creature, sends Stevan into greater frenzy and the Elders believe him mad.

Act 3 The garden of a decayed inn. A crowd of people is present. Juvan the student, old Bogobog and his daughter Kruna are in the midst of the group. They await the return of their three emissaries to the

~~to~~ the town council. When the American Teiterlik and Fiewel come in with their discouraging report, Juvan the leader, urges the people to arm themselves and plunder the lands and homes of the rich farmers who would banish them. Mirko and Stanja arrive. Stanja is immediately attracted to Juvan, and Mirko, remembering what his sweetheart has told him of the scholar she once met, becomes fiercely jealous and challenges Juvan to a fight on a slight pretext. As the men face each other with bared knives, a sudden darkness passes over the scene and when it lifts, the people are hysterical with fear. The Innkeeper rushes out, panic-stricken and Juvan, dashing into the inn, returns, deadly pale, and summons the crowd to action as he says: ".....He has come to us - the one who was denied. He has escaped. Now the secret has been given into my hands."

Act 4 The interior of the Greek Orthodox village church. Teiterlik, Fiewel and the American, officers under Juvan's command, bring reports of the plunder, revolution and slaughter they have brought about. Now the people wish to see the god who motivated the uprising, the god whom Juvan brought unseen to the church and secreted in the sanctuary. The crowd surges into the church and Juvan exhorts them, saying that the holy god will free them from all restraints. The lights grow dimmer and charcoal

burners, clad in fur garments and wearing horn ornaments on their heads, play weird and monotonous music on their instruments until even Teiterlik and the other leaders are hypnotized. Stevan, the mother, Mirko, Babka and the Elders enter the church and Stevan, vehemently denouncing the crowd, promises mercy if they cease their plunder and return his son, the nameless unbaptized creature, to him. Juvan demands that Stanja enter the sanctuary and lead out the monster - only then will he accede to Stevan's exchange. Stanja, unafraid and scornful of Juvan's protective knife, goes to be his sacrifice to the creature behind the altar. Mirko, attempting to attack Juvan, falls on the sword of a guard and dies. His family and Babka take his dead body from the church. The bells on the church ring wildly and a superhuman cry comes from the sanctuary as Juvan, prevented by Bogoboj from rushing to Stanja's aid, announces the coming of the god. The lights blaze high, the people retreat in fear and worship, the royal gate swings open - and the curtain falls.

Act 5 The courtyard amid the ruins of Stevan's farm.

Stevan is happy in his release from the secret he has carried for so long. Both his sons are dead for the nameless one escaped into the burning woods and died there. The mother appears. A new tenderness springs up between her and her husband - for the

first time in years they call each other husband and wife. Stanja comes in. She has no wish to return to her people and the mother finds in her a person she can love and trust. She urges Stanja to stay and even the entreaties of Stanja's parents who come to take her home cannot shake her determination to remain. Juvan appears in chains for he is on his way to be hanged. He and Stanja pledge their love for each other - a love which had been between them from the beginning although it was not named. Stanja wishes to die with him but Juvan will not permit it. He is led away and the Hangman, very drunk, passes by, chuckling over a curious charred figure he had found in the woods. He intends to take the creature to a priest for a blessing before he does away with it. The mother is stricken because the monster child of her body will be thrown to the carrion and no trace of the secret she bore will be left to the world. But Stanja's words that she is carrying the monster's child promises its propagation.

BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK

George Kaufman - Marc Connelly

BEGGER ON HORSEBACK is another example of the influence exerted by German Expressionists upon American producers and playwrights. Although Mr. Winthrop Ames commissioned Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly to make this adaptation from the short German play, HANS SONNENSTOESSERS HOHLENFAHRT, the American version is an innovation for it satirizes theories and practices which are undeniably American.

The play is in two parts and a pantomime. There is no numerical scene division in the text but the scenes blend and fade into each other in the manner of a dream for the greater part of this work is expressed through the medium of fantasy - Neil's vision of what might happen if he married Gladys. Music and dancing are means of motivation and exposition, and the tempo ranges from harsh jazz discords to lofty notes of idealism.

Although the play abounds in symbolism, the characters are realistically vivid. The Cady family is typical. Mrs. Cady is a social climber and insincere. Mr. Cady is presented as a completely satisfied and self-important business man. Homer is his mother's darling, ^{who} lays claim to the only armchair in a room by divine right and ~~he~~ takes the opposite view of any subject discussed. Gladys is a superficial and empty-headed idiot who is infatuated with genius (until something else turns up) as personified in

Neil.

The characteristics of these family members are made more extreme and grotesque as the play proceeds. Mr. Cady's inevitable gold-togs become more pronounced and he issues orders into a telephone strapped to his chest; Homer's yellow tie assumes huge proportions; Mrs. Cady becomes chair-bound as she knits incessantly and adds hymn singing to her repertoire of accomplishments.

The courtroom scene is the Big Show in the sense that most trials in this country resemble mammoth spectacles for the public. Mr. Cady turns out to be the judge, Homer is the prosecuting attorney and the dancing masters are the jurors. The show idea is further carried out by placing a ticket taker's box at the door, and allowing hat check boys and candy vendors to roam the foyer. The trial itself is a kaleidoscope - a trial born of a nightmare. The characters are exaggerated, ludicrous or paradoxical.

The exquisite interlude which takes place in this scene - the pantomime created by Neil and Cynthia out of their dream together - deserves consideration.

"A Kiss in Xanadu"

The Prince and Princess of Xanadu are secretly bored with each other because of their conventional routine. Each slips out, one moonlight night, in search of adventure. Disguised, they meet on a park bench and fall in love. Only two roses remain as mementos of that adventure - a rose which the Prince retains because the Princess

refused it and a second rose which the Princess accepted from the Prince. At dawn, each returns alone, and arriving at the chamber window, slips quietly in and to bed. Neither knows the other is the partner of the night's romance. In the morning, at the breakfast table each secretly fondles a rose.

This interlude symbolizes the lost romance of Neil and Cynthia, and Cynthia suggests that Neil play it that the court might know of the music that was thwarted by Gladys' selfish demands on her husband, but the court, like any other judicial session, can see only the facts and not the dream.

An amusing fling is taken at the efficiency methods of big business. Neil is put to work in Mr. Cady's office and he asks a stenographer for a pencil. He must fill out a requisition, including the names of his parents and what he did with his last pencil. Then Neil passes to another office for more questioning, after which his requisition is stamped. He is sent to the President's office for a final O. K. before he can receive his pencil. In the office of Mr. Cady, the President, Neil encounters a meeting of the directors before whom Cady asks Neil to make an address. Neil's speech is a combination of an Horatio Alger story and the endorsement of a self-made man who has risen from the ranks because of his exposure to a correspondence course in business.

The most effective satirical scene occurs when Neil is an inmate of the art factory and in company with other artists, each occupying an individual cell, he is forced to

turn out music while a gaping, sight-seeing crowd looks on. The guide who escorts the visitors delivers the same kind of speech that one might hear on the tour of an old ruin or a cheese factory. The visitors utter the same kinds of exclamations they would bestow on a new transatlantic liner or animals in a zoo. In fact, the scene resembles a zoo with the animals exhibiting their tricks for the lookers on. Each artist is required to give an example of his activity and it is amusing to hear the public's admiration for the novelist's new work, "Love Eternal" which is based on his previous book, "Eternal Love." The artist's blank canvas calls forth empty superlatives and the proletariat has paid tribute to something it can neither evaluate nor understand.

In satirizing business and the intricate use of numbers and hollow forms, BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK is faintly reminiscent of THE ADDING MACHINE. However, the parodies in the Kaufman-Connelly vehicle are more genially presented and more deeply biting. The pandering of genius in the business marts of the world is not a new theme but in their attacks on business intricacies, ideals in art and the power of money, the authors of BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK have struck fundamentals at once human and national.

BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK

Part 1

Scene 1 Neil McRae's apartment. Cynthia Mason, a girl from across the hall, meets Dr. Albert Rice, a friend of Neil's. Neil comes in shortly afterwards followed by the invited tea guests, a family of four by the name of Cady. Cynthia serves tea and leaves the room. After the Cadys leave, Albert tells Neil he should insure his future by marrying Gladys Cady so that he can be released from hack work and devote his time and energy to the products of his musical genius. When Neil tells Cynthia of Albert's suggestion, he also tells Cynthia of his love for her but Cynthia, although her heart is almost breaking, lightly turns aside Neil's declaration in the interests of his work and Neil, believing she does not love him, lets her go. A few minutes later, Gladys telephones, Neil proposes to her and he is accepted with alacrity. Neil falls asleep and the jazz music in the cafe across the street changes to a wedding march. The lights go down and then come up. The scene has changed.

A railroad with tracks and the rear of a train is revealed. However, Neil's piano and easy chair are in their original positions. A wedding

procession comes down the aisle of the theatre with Gladys as the gorgeous bride. Neil is aroused and a fantastical wedding ceremony takes place, with the reprehensible characteristics of the Cadys exaggerated. The usual bustle of a railroad terminal goes on, sometimes merging with the wedding ceremony, then shrieking above it. From the train, Gladys throws her bouquet of bank-notes and the ushers scramble madly for the money. Neil has been sold. The lights go down and another set is revealed.

A sumptuous hall in the house bought by the Cadys. Neil is exhibited to the assembled tea guests as something unusual purchased by Gladys. Bewildered, he is forced to wander among them and greet them. All conversations end with the same refrain, "Play something for us, Neil." Finally, in desperation, Neil sits at the piano which has remained in the same position as in the first scene of the play. As he begins to play a dreamy melody, the scene changes.

Through the window near the piano comes Cynthia. Neil tells her his marriage is a mistake and she replies she wants him to be happy. Against his will, Neil's music turns to jazz and Cynthia disappears. Mr. Cady is seen and with him several

men who enter an imaginary elevator. Neil joins them for he is now in business and Mr. Cady warns him to be on time. The men in the elevator are introduced.

A small office. Neil's quest for a pencil brings him to the office of the President of the firm who is no other than Mr. Cady. Mr. Cady welcomes Neil to a conference and buys the attention of the directors with gold pieces while Neil makes a speech. Neil is showered with the money and as the scene closes, Gladys appears in evening dress and drags her husband, protestingly, to a restaurant. The nightmare element goes on and the scene changes again.

A restaurant where the headwaiter is Albert who dances with Gladys. As the jazz dancing continues the scene changes to a charming cottage with keynotes of chintz and daffodils. Neil and Cynthia are breakfasting and Neil is elated that his symphony is to be played by a famous orchestra. Gladys' voice rings like a clarion and the curtain drops behind Neil as he leaves the cottage to take Gladys home.

The Cady home. The last straw for Neil comes in the persons of the dancing masters who have been

engaged to teach Neil how to dance. In a frenzy, Neil grabs a paper knife and stabs in turn, Gladys, Mrs. Cady, Mr. Cady and Homer, Gladys' brother. Newspaper reporters appear and the scene closes as newsboys rush down the aisles of the theatre, bearing accounts of the murders.

Part 2

A courtroom is shown, but it is a courtroom with innovations. (See the preceding discussion). Neil goes to the piano to play his symphony in order to prove that he was justified in killing the persons who prevent him from working on it. Only discord arises from the keyboard. Neil is distracted because Gladys has torn the manuscript and thus destroyed the symphony. Cynthia comes in and suggests to Neil that they play the pantomime they wrote together, "A Kiss in Xanadu." (See the accompanying text). In the darkness which follows, the scene changes to the courtroom again.

The jurors decree that Neil is guilty and Mr. Cady, who is the judge, sentences Neil to imprisonment in his art factory where he must write music by the system.

A tier of cells in the art factory. The cells contain a poet, a painter, a novelist and Neil.

A guide shows visitors through the corridor. Unlike the other geniuses, Neil refuses to make an exhibition of himself and opening his door by force, he finds it was never locked and he is free. He calls Cynthia who comes to him and together, they make arrangements for Neil's execution for now he is free to die. Cynthia promises to stay by him, asserting the execution will not hurt. The stage grows dim with an indistinct light playing on Neil.

When the light goes up, Neil's apartment is revealed. A knock on the door awakens Neil and Cynthia comes in. She has changed her mind about marrying him. As they are happily reconciled, Neil remembers his proposal to Gladys but Gladys herself makes an appearance and releases Neil from his promise because she has met someone she likes better.

THE GREAT GOD BROWN

Eugene O'Neill

THE GREAT GOD BROWN, arranged in four acts, several scenes, a Prologue and an Epilogue, utilizes symbolical masks and scenery which expresses situation. Mr. R. Dana Skinner offers a comment on the play which might be applied with equal truth to LAZARUS LAUGHED: ".....O'Neill begins to fathom the meaning of earthly suffering....He tells us.....that from the tears of earth is born the eternal laughter of Heaven - that resurrection is beyond death - that man should keep himself forever as a pilgrim on this earth - and that God is!"¹

The use of masks, which Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn terms "strong confusing symbolism", is the manifestation of the fundamental thought of the play. As the story proceeds, the major characters - Dion, Billy Brown and Margaret - wear masks according to the personalities they conceal or assume. These masks of realism are sometimes better understood by the reader of the play than by the observer for there are occasions when the masks are changed so rapidly and often that the printed text alone saves the reader from being plunged into bewilderment. Scene 1 of Act 4, where Billy Brown makes several exits and entrances for the purpose of changing his masks, is particularly confusing.

1. Our Changing Theatre. R. Dana Skinner Page 46

What is the universally human truth behind this use of masks? The average person has more than one side to his nature. To some people he shows one side and to others - a different personality. The masks which he wears to hide his real expression becomes the familiar countenance by which his associates recognize him. Then, when the mask falls away and his real features are revealed, even his most intimate friends will fail to recognize him. Margaret would not give herself to the real Dion for she was so engrossed in lavishing her affection on Dion as she recognized him that she did not attempt to penetrate and to understand the real sensitive and spiritual soul that was his. In the case where she bestowed her love upon the Dion-masked Brown, there is the rather pathetic and ironical circumstance in which love seems to be a surface attraction - and recognizes the physical form rather than the hidden spirit.

Pride forced Dion to wear a mocking mask for his sensitive soul could not endure the misunderstanding of the world. He never unmasked himself, except when he was alone, for Margaret had fallen in love with his mask and the two attempts whereby he tried to make Margaret love the real Dion, by facing her with bared features, were too terrifying for him to repeat. She recoiled as though she had met a stranger.

In Brown are symbolized the aspirations and limitations of the average man - the kind of man, nevertheless, who arouses envy in some more gifted but less ambitious

and active persons. Billy Brown, practical and sincere, wore no mask until he murdered Dion when he donned a mask with a characteristic expression of amiability in order to hide the ravaging effects which his deception had made upon his features. This mask he alternated with the mask of Dion. It is interesting to note that after prolonged contact with Dion's mask, Brown's face took on the characteristics of Dion's countenance, thus proving the theory that imitation can bring about resemblances to the object imitated.

Cybel moves throughout the play like the Mother of Mankind. She is at once voluptuous and maternal. Her mask bears the painted and bold expression of a prostitute, whereas Cybel herself is the symbol of the earth spirit which yearns to comfort and mother men. Her parting words to Dion, "...and after you're asleep, I'll tuck you in" are beautifully fulfilled when she wraps her garment over the dying Billy whose face is carved with the same tortured lines that characterized the face of Dion.

The scenery reflects the moods of the scenes. The backdrop of Billy Brown's office is painted with the trivialities of his tastefully and conservatively furnished room. Seven years after Dion's meeting with Cybel the wallpaper in her parlor, which had previously suggested a barren, untended field in early spring, conveys an impression of fruits in full maturity and richness, symbolizing a development of spiritual fulfillment in Dion as well as

greater voluptuousness in Cybel. Dion Anthony's home is characterized by the details of its backdrop which indicate triteness and monotony in the decoration of the room.

Probably the most impressive scene occurs at the end of Act 4 when Cybel removes Dion's mask from the face of Brown as he dies and Margaret rushes in to grasp the empty mask and croon her love to it. Then comes the culminating ironic and artistic touch when the policeman asks Cybel the name of the dead Brown and she answers, "His name is Man", whereupon the phlegmatic officer queries, "And how d'yuh spell it?"

One cannot overlook the limitations and inconsistencies of the play for there is no really lovable character in it. Margaret's possessiveness arouses resentment and not admiration and there is no reaction of pity for Dion because he is such a fatalist and makes little effort to better his circumstances. However, Mr. O'Neill has struck sharply and deeply at the complexity of human nature as interpreted in terms of personality.

Synopsis of THE GREAT GOD BROWN

Prologue A cross-section of the pier at a Casino. A moonlight night in June. Billy Brown's parents suggest that Billy go to college and then become an architect so that he can be taken into his father's firm. Bill agrees and they return to the Casino. Dion Anthony appears with his parents. Dion wears a mask which is sensual, mocking and Pan-like. Beneath it his own features are sensitive, beautiful and sad. When Anthony Senior hears that Billy Brown is going to college, he determines that his son, too, must be an architect. Dion's derision throughout the scene is not understood by his parents and they return to the Casino. Margaret and Billy come on the Pier but Margaret is indifferent to Billy's love-making and discouraged, he leaves her to find Dion and tell him that Margaret is waiting for him. When he is alone, Dion unmask and his face is filled with rapture at the thought of Margaret's love for him, but Margaret, approaching, is terrified at Dion and only when he masks his features does she recognize him and yield to his love. She is not masked.

Act 1

Scene 1 Seven years later. The sitting room in Dion's

house. Dion, unmasked, reads the Bible but he puts it aside and replaces his mask when Margaret comes in. It is evident that Dion is not an economic success and Margaret tactfully suggests that he do something with his painting. She has applied for a position in a library. Throughout the scene, Dion is intensely derisive even though his hidden features have become more ascetic and tortured in appearance.

Scene 2 Billy Brown's office. Billy Brown is the sole director of the firm and he has become a fine-looking, well-dressed, college-bred American business man. Margaret comes in to enlist Billy's aid in giving Dion work. She is too loyal and proud to admit their need of money and only by sheer strategy can Billy suggest that Dion would be an invaluable assistant to him because of the pressure of his work. Margaret accepts for Dion.

Scene 3 Cybel's parlor. Dion is asleep on the couch but Cybel awakens him to send him home for she found him in a drunken stupor on her doorstep and she took him in so that he would not be arrested. As he is aroused to full consciousness, Dion slips on his mask and Cybel, hurt by this gesture, dons a mask of her own which has the fixed, painted expression of the professional prostitute. Dion, ashamed at his pretense, removes his mask and Cybel

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does likewise. Billy enters in search of Dion, and tells Dion of the work which is awaiting him in the office. Dion sees through the ruse brought about through Margaret's intercession, but he accepts the offer and his words are more satirical than ever."

Act 2

- Scene 1 Cybel's parlor. Seven years later. Spring. Cybel and Dion play cards together. Evidently, a deep understanding and tolerance exists between them, even though Dion, when he hears of Billy Brown's expected arrival, dons his mask which has lost its Pan-like look and bears Mephistophelean resemblances. As Dion leaves, Cybel bids him goodbye with a premonition that she will not see him again for a long time. When Billy Brown comes, Cybel, being unmasked, is not recognized by him and he believes her to be Cybel's sister. Immediately, thinking that Dion loves the woman and wishing to possess anything that Dion attracts, Billy Brown offers her his protection in exchange for her love which she refuses.
- Scene 2 The drafting room in Brown's office. Margaret comes to see Dion who, in a moment of love and pity for her, removes his mask and asks forgiveness for his eccentricities but Margaret, in terror at the strange face before her, faints and when her sons, coming in, go to her aid, Dion



announces that he is going away and for them to communicate with Billy Brown's house.

Scene 3 The library of Billy Brown's house. Evening.

Dion comes to Brown and commits Margaret and his sons to Brown's care. As Dion bequeaths Dion to Brown, his mask slips and reveals a face of martyr-like suffering. He dies, presumably from a heart attack, but in reality, from Brown's attempt to choke him. Brown removes the body and when Margaret comes in, searching for Dion, Brown returns from another room, wearing Dion's mask. Margaret, who has worn a mask for several years to hide her suffering, removes it, believing she is with her husband. She and Brown embrace and both are thrilled at the encounter. They leave for the Anthony home.

Act 3

Scene 1 The drafting room and Brown's private office are shown. Two draftsmen speak of the disappearance of Dion whom Brown claimed he fired. Margaret, unmasked, comes in. She is radiant with happiness. She surprises the draftsmen by asking for Dion and they assume that she has been led to believe that he still works there, so they answer evasively. Brown appears and takes Margaret into his office where he pours out a torrent of love for her. She is amazed and disgusted and after

he has begged forgiveness, he tells her he is going away and leave the business in Dion's hands. Margaret is delighted and soon goes. A client comes in to complain of some work and Brown states that Dion is still with the office and will do the work.

Scene 2 The library of Brown's home. The same night. Brown comes in, and addressing the mask of Dion propped beneath the light, he speaks of his narrow escape from identity that day and plans a trip to Europe so that Billy Brown may die.

Scene 3 Little action takes place except for Margaret's account to Brown, whom she believes to be Dion, of her interview with Brown and his strange behaviour which indicates he should take a vacation.

Act 4

Scene 1 The drafting room and Brown's office. Margaret is in the office and a committee arrives to view plans they had ordered. Brown asks Margaret to receive the group while he fetches Dion. She does so and cannot refrain from showing the committee the plans intended for them and telling them that it is Dion's work. Brown enters in time to hear Margaret criticize him because he led the Committee to believe the work was his own so he disappears again while he dons Dion's mask. Reappearing, he startles the group by his pan-like

capers and as he prances from the room, he informs the draftsmen that he has killed Brown whereupon, they rush into the inner room and return with the mask of William Brown, carrying it as though it were a body.

Scene 2 The library of William Brown's house. The mask of Dion is on a table before Brown. Cybel enters and with the remark, "You are Dion Brown, she immediately grasps the situation and urges him to hurry away as a search is being made for him. It is too late. A volley of bullets from the French windows knock him down and Cybel lifts him to the couch - placing the mask of Dion beneath the lamp. Margaret rushes in and clasps the mask passionately, kissing it again and again as she pledges endless devotion to it. Billy dies in Cybel's arms as the police withdraw that she may get a confession from him. Margaret still vows eternal love to Dion for he is not dead but sleeping in her heart.

Epilogue Four years later. The same spot as the Prologue. Margaret, still beautiful, wears the mask of a proud indulgent mother. Her grown sons are embarrassed by her remiscences of the night Dion proposed to her and they leave her while she un-masks her sweet resigned face to the moon and vows unending love to the mask of Dion which she takes from her cloak.

MACHINAL

Sophie Treadwell

MACHINAL is a tragedy in ten episodes linked together by fading light. Its innovation consists in the sound, rhythm and movement which symbolize the mood and tempo of modern life as it reacts upon a Young Woman. The dialogue is noticeably terse, staccato and sparse, particularly in the office and speakeasy scenes which are unusually representative of certain phases of American life. The action of the play is as swift and hectic as the dialogue indicates.

In each episode of the play, there is a key noise - an intermittent obligato or contrast to the action: the plugging of the switchboard and the crash of typewriters in the office, the riveting at the hospital, the electric piano in the speakeasy, the romantic melody played by the hurdy-gurdy outside the Man's apartment, the chattering of the telegraph keys in the courtroom and the combination of noises from the outside world, interspersed with the chanting of the Priest, in the final scenes.

The characters are listed as types, except for Jones, who, after all, is one of thousands, and in the courtroom scene when the Young Woman becomes the universal Helen Jones and the Man the unknown Richard Roe. Although this tag classification of the characters speaks for their universality, the author in her Preface to the play, feels called upon to deny vehemently any allusions to, or influences from, the recent Ruth Snyder - Judd Gray murder case.

The execution scene is daring and horrible. The reader wonders how an audience would react to it for one can read with comparative ease what one would recoil from on the stage.

The Young Woman is presented as a highly nervous and chaffing individual, constantly in search of the person and experience which will understand her and her ideals. She is a selfish Young Woman, too, for she wants her dreams realized without paying the price for that realization. When she falls in love with the casually met Man, she endows him with virtues he never possessed because she finds beauty in her intimate relations with him. This love is ironical but it is also absurd. It seems impossible that a girl of the superlative standards which the Young Woman of this play professes could yield these standards so readily and more than that - justify her action by establishing her personal inclinations as criteria of her conduct! One has a fleeting regret for the Man's betrayal of her as she was tried for murder, but after all, human beings seldom fail us. We fail ourselves when we set average persons on elevations they cannot occupy, and the tumble they inevitably take is not theirs but ours.

Of course, it is rather thrilling to come in contact with the Neurotic Young Woman of this play and listen to her reiterated plaintive echo for "Somebody" who understands, but if she had married a handsome young man with little money and an equal amount of sense, her cry would have been

directed at a man who could give her the glamour of luxuries.

This play may reflect the moods and tempo of modern life but one feels that the Young Woman made no attempt to adjust herself to life as it became her environment and consequently, she becomes an interesting case for a nerve specialist. The atmosphere of the play is found in its background and not in its leading character.

Synopsis of MACHINAL

- Episode 1 The office of the George H. Jones Company. It is the usual highpower office with modern standard equipment and efficient workers. The Young Woman is late again. She gives no reason for she is not understood by her fellow-workers who pass various inuendos because she is much in demand by Jones the Boss. The Young Woman thinks of the ease she can have as the Boss's wife but she shrinks from the obligation which wifehood would impose upon her. The scene blacks out as the Stenographer recalls her to her senses.
- Episode 2 The Young Woman at home. The Mother is a whining woman who frequently reminds her daughter how lucky she is and how queer she is with her odd notions. The Young Woman tells the Mother of Jones' infatuation for her but she cannot make her Mother understand the repulsion she has for him. Through the window comes a sentimental mother song which makes the silly Mother of the Young Woman weep. In desperation, the Young Woman promises to marry her Boss. The song grows jazzy and the lights fade.
- Episode 3 The Honeymoon. This is a sordid picture of the Young Woman's terror and repulsion on her wedding night. Even the Husband's attempts at comfort

are devoid of tenderness and jazz music from a Casino across the street blares loudly as darkness descends on the scene.

Episode 4 Maternal. The Young Woman has given birth to a child. She is fretful and resentful at her motherhood. The riveting on the new wing of the hospital drives her into a frenzy and sending away Husband and baby, she pours out a wild plea to be left alone. The riveting goes on as the scene is wiped out.

Episode 5 The Speakeasy. The Young Woman has come with the Telephone Girl to get a taste of "a good time." Left together, the Young Woman and her companion become better acquainted and the Man tells the Young Woman how he was once captured by bandits in Mexico and made his escape by slaying one of his guards with a bottle containing pebbles. Later, the couple leaves to go to the Man's apartment. The strident music of an electric piano is the note on which the scene ends.

Episode 6 A dark room. The Young Woman indulges in romantic and idealistic interpretation over an intimacy the enthusiasm and sentimentality of which the Man does not share. A hurdy-gurdy outside playing "Cielito Lindo" furnishes the music for this episode. As the Young Woman leaves, she notices a bowl containing pebbles and Chinese lilies. She asks if she may take it with her and the Man

consents. The lights die out.

Episode A sitting room. The Husband's trite bromidic
7 comments on the business deal he has just completed drives his wife into a frenzy. Then there begins a procession of all the undercurrents which have found their way into the Young Woman's consciousness: a hurdy-gurdy is heard playing "Cielito Lindo", a Boy and a Girl who appeared in the speak-easy scene come on and the Boy uses the Man's words in describing the killing of a Mexican bandit with a bottle of pebbles, voices off stage repeat the words "bottle" and "stone" and an Old Man (probably the Husband in later years) enters and mumbles the words, too. All the chanting goes on simultaneously until the Young Woman, unable to endure it, leaves the room as the lights are extinguished.

Episode The Law. The Young Woman is being tried for the
8 murder of her husband, whom she is accused of killing with a bottle of stones. Bit by bit the evidence is piled up against her and it reaches a climax when an affidavit from a Richard Roe of Mexico tells of his meeting with Helen Jones in a New York speakeasy, her intimate relations with him and the bowl of Chinese lilies in pebbles which he had given to her. In her agony at this revelation of an affair which had an element of sacredness for her, the Young Woman confesses her

crime of murder. Her continued moaning and the clattering of the telegraph keys form the chorus of sounds which continues until the scene disappears.

Episode In a Prison. The Young Woman awaits death. A
9 negro prisoner sings spirituals, a priest offers prayers, an aeroplane roars overhead and the mother of the Young Woman takes a sobbing farewell. The Young Woman, led by the chanting priest, is escorted toward the death chamber. The lights disappear.

Episode In the dark. The Reporters and Officials await
10 the coming of the Young Woman. They indulge in morbid speculation. When the Woman comes in view with the praying Priest, they comment on her changed appearance. The Priest's voice drones on until the Woman's stabbing plea for understanding is wiped out by silence. The continued intonation of "Christ have mercy" is heard as the lights glow in brilliant colors and the curtain falls.

EACH IN HIS OWN WAY

Luigi Pirandello

The accompanying caption of EACH IN HIS OWN WAY states it to be "A Comedy in Two or Three Acts with Choral Interludes." Following the list of characters comes this intriguing note: ".....The number of acts in the comedy cannot be made more specific in view of unpleasant incidents that will arise during the course of the performance." Naturally, as in the days when one read a forbidden romantic novel, the reader is tempted to turn to the last page of the text and find out if there is a third act and if not, why not.

After a thorough perusal of the text as well as an immediate scanning of the last pages, it is evident there is no third act and that the threatened incidents took place for there are but two acts, each followed by a choral interlude which is enacted in the theatre lobby as soon as the curtain descends at the conclusion of the acts.

One questions if this is a play within reality or reality within a play. Again, one suspects Signor Pirandello of undue sharpening of his wits for a problem akin to that in SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR arises when the reader of EACH IN HIS OWN WAY attempts to solve the intricate and confusing psycho-analysis and planes of reality which the playwright mixes as vividly and freely as he would a box of brightly colored Christmas candy. Only a complete copy of the text could justify every trend and motive which are called into existence by the mental action

of the play.

Signor Pirandello executes amazing complication in the drama. He puts into a play the story of a sensational love affair. In the audience which watches the play are two characters concerned with a similar episode in life. They become incensed at what they consider a liberty taken with their personal affair and after considerable fuss and an attack upon the Stage Manager and the Leading Lady, they run off together exactly as did the actors in the play. Did the author of the play within a play take his situation from life or was the stage situation so life-like that the principals concerned saw themselves in it?

The problem cannot be solved to the satisfaction of every critic but there are characteristics of the play which are not as complicated and very amusing. The playwright has painted with vivid detail the personalities and types which attend a theatrical "first night." The people appearing in the theatre lobby bear the names: Five Dramatic Critics, Young Author, Good-natured Spectator, A Man who Understands and A Man Who Never Understands. In the same interlude, some spectators call the performance they have witnessed wonderful, others declare it lacks even the beginning of clearness and sense. The friends of Pirandello are loud in their praises whereas their opponents are scathing in their comments. A Literary Man (who never writes) airs his views on the drama and the Old Author (who has never had a play produced) puts thumbs down on the production. Delightful irony!

Why then the title EACH IN HIS OWN WAY? In the stage story of Savio, Doro and Delia, Diego, friend to them all, seems to be the only person who understands the almost unfathomable mental processes of the three characters whose flitting changes from one opinion to another are so baffling to their friends. To Diego that inconsistency is the secret of individuality and it has been presented in the personalities of Doro, Savio and Delia who are their natural selves at all times although their associates choose to interpret that naturalness as vagaries of temperament or deliberate scheming.

Because the characters in the interlude interpret the play they have witnessed as bearing upon their own affair and because the stage company is so aroused at the accusation that its members refuse to continue the performance, there are only two acts, after all. If a third act ^{were} ~~was~~ appended, the plot would not be what it is!

Synopsis of EACH IN HIS OWN WAY

Act 1

The ancient palace of Donna Livia Palegari. Donna Livia is perturbed over the scandal involved when her son, Doro, defended the reputation of a notorious woman at a recent salon. In vain, some of her guests and Diedo Cinci try to placate her and with the arrival of Doro, matters seem to be smoothed when he admits he was a bit too vehement in what he said about Delia Morello because of the attack made on her reputation by Francesco Savio. But later, Diego, the friend to Doro, is made the target of Doro's wrath - for Doro thinks that too much ado has been made over his defense of a woman who caused the suicide of an artist whom she betrayed by an affair with his sister's fiance. Matters are made worse by the arrival of Francesco Savio who comes to apologize to Doro for his argument of the previous evening - for now Savio admits that Doro was right. Doro is furious because Savio has changed his viewpoint for he has come to agree with Savio. The upshot is that Doro so insults Savio that the latter goes out threatening a duel. Delia Morello calls on Doro to tell him that she has come to see herself as Doro described her and she gives her reasons and motives for her affair with Rocca, the fiance to the sister of the suicide. When Donna Livia asks Doro for the cause of the intended duel with Savio, Doro replies that it is not for the woman but for something no one understands.



Interlude

A section of the theatre lobby opening into the orchestra. The first part of the scene is dumb-show, with the spectators coming from the auditorium and congregating in groups while the critics roam alone, at first, and then get together to obtain a line on what the other critics are thinking of the play. A Spectator from the Social Set suggests the key to the play by pointing out that it is a version of the Moreno affair taken from real life. The actress Moreno was responsible for the suicide of La Vela, the sculptor, and Baron Nutti is the man who was to marry La Vela's sister. The crowd is eager to return for the second act. Baron Nutti is raging at the play and Signora Moreno is furious at what she considers an insult to her for she has seen herself in the play. Her friends subdue her and she returns to witness the remainder of the performance.

Act 2

The house of Francesco Savio. Francesco explains to several friends his reasons for engaging in the duel, for the friends cannot understand why Savio and Doro are fighting because each agreed to the other's viewpoint. Diego is adept at analyzing and explaining the urges and motives underlying human psychology and he seems to fathom the reasoning of Savio, Doro and Delia Morello. He explains Rocca's attitude as fury at a rebuff for which he had been used by Delia to revenge her artist lover because of the contempt his mother

and sister held for her. Diego's uncompromising solution to the confused version of the affair causes harangues and criticisms from Savio's friends but the announcement that Delia has come to see Savio changes the conversation into speculation. Rocca forces his way into the room in search of Delia, and gives two accounts of his conduct which do not tally. Savio, re-entering the room, is amazed at Rocca's presence and believes the duel is off. When Delia comes in, the attraction between her and Rocca is undeniable and crying that all they have said and done is a fabrication to hide their attachment to each other, they run off together.

Second Choral Interlude

The theatre lobby again. Noises are heard from the orchestra section and some spectators come out as the noise in the auditorium becomes tremendous. The news spreads that the actress Moreno has gone backstage to attack the Stage Manager and the Leading Lady. Voices from the crowd of spectators merge in a medley of anger, excitement, orders to put out the intruder, and commands for the procedure of the third act. The Treasurer tries to prevent the actors from leaving the theatre but they reply that the leading lady has gone home because a woman came through the stage entrance and slapped her face. The cast is leaving in protest. Baron Nuti appears, boiling over in indignation at the show and conceding that the cast is justified in refusing to continue the performance. The actress Moreno

appears, haranguing the Stage Manager because she insists the leading lady has mimicked her voice and gestures.

Baron Nuti, approaching, calls the actress by her first name and immediately, there is enacted the same scene as appeared at the end of the last act. Passion flares between Nuti and the Moreno woman and to the shock of the excited Spectators, they go off together. The Treasurer and Stage Manager call off the last act because the actors have gone home. The spectators are "shooed" from the lobby and told the show is over for the night. The curtain falls but immediately, the Stage Manager appears before it and over the footlights he announces that because of the incidents which took place at the end of the second act, the performance cannot be continued.

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

Luigi Pirandello

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR is captioned "A Comedy in the Making." To be more explicit, it is a play within a play. The members of the *dramatis personae* are divided into two groups: the characters in the comedy in the making and the actors of the theatre company.

In this play Signor Pirandello attempts to present simultaneously, two planes of life - one real and the other illusory. Not only is the time of the action paralleled, but the same place, movements and methods are utilized. In addition to this objective, there are expounded two ideas which Professor Chandler summarizes as follows: "One is the notion that he who creates characters in a play is less real than they, since he may change or die, whereas they remain, still vital and unaltered. The other is the notion that acquiescence to an evil deed will entail evil consequences however long deferred."¹

As the appended synopsis of the plays indicate, Signor Pirandello presents the contrast between reality and fantasy through the medium of a stage rehearsal. When the characters of the comedy in the making first appear, there is a faint light of illusion about them which disappears as they approach the footlights. Later in the play, when the actors of the company attempt to interpret a scene enacted by the characters, the characters cannot see themselves as

1. Modern Continental Playwrights Frank W. Chandler P. 583

real and the actors cannot imitate the characters without the mannerisms, psychology and expression of the theatre. Thus, understanding between the two groups is impossible.

Signor Pirandello's artistic strength is evident at the beginning of the drama when the audience enters the theatre auditorium to find the curtain raised and the dreary and shadowy stage as it appears without scenery and adequate lighting. Immediately, the playwright has made the stage real and the members of the company, assembling slowly and chatting, smoking or reading until the rehearsal is called, add to that reality. When the characters from outside appear through the stage door, they seem unreal and fantastic. Then their attempt to interpret their life situation into dramatic expression and the attempt of the actors to give that situation reality through the art of the theatre, make a problem of metaphysics which causes a whirl in the average brain.

Reality is further advanced in the absence of scene or act division. The performance of the play is interrupted once, without the lowering of the curtain, when the Manager and the six characters withdraw to arrange a scenario from the story told by the group. A second interruption of the action takes place when one of the stage hands, by mistake, lets down the curtain.

Of course, Signor Pirandello lets no opportunity pass for philosophical discussions of reality and illusion with their respective validities, for the text of the play is

peppered with speeches which the clever but occasionally wearisome author puts into the mouths of his characters. Like Narcissus, Signor Pirandello is interested in Luigi Pirandello and he cannot keep himself out of his plays for he reminds his readers of his presence, either through his theories or by direct allusion to himself. In an age of publicity, he is his own publicity agent and perhaps the height of genius is achieved when genius can satirize its own genre!

To quote all the philosophical arguments in this play would be the compilation of another thesis. The ending of the drama gives the reader who tries to fathom it many sleepless nights. Are the drowning of the Child in the fountain and the subsequent suicide of the Boy real according to life, or is the double tragedy a pretense to give an illusion of reality to the stage?

The writer hopes to be pardoned for voicing her opinion in the concluding words of the play, when the exasperated Manager justifiably explodes his sentiments: "Pretense? Reality? To hell with it all! I've lost a whole day over these people, a whole day."

Synopsis of SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR

Act 1 The Manager is about to rehearse a play by Pirandello. As the actors assemble, six characters appear and insist that they be provided with an author so that they can make their own drama. In spite of himself, the Manager is interested in their story. The actors of the company are left standing aside as a drama from "real" life unfolds itself. The characters are the Father, Mother, Son, Step-daughter, Boy and the Child. The Father married the Mother out of pity and she bore him the Son who now wishes to disclaim all name or kinship with the other children. The Mother fell in love with a clerk whom the Father brought to the house and bored by his wife's colorless personality, the Father banished the lovers from his home. Following several years of complete happiness, the clerk died leaving the Mother and three children, the Step-daughter, the Boy and the Child in poverty. The Mother and Step-daughter were hired by a modiste of doubtful reputation and worked there until the Father, visiting the establishment for questionable purposes, found them and took them home with him. The Step-daughter accused the Father of undue intimacy with her and the Son resented the intrusion of this group into the home. The Father, with a view to dramatizing himself and the other characters offers a solution whereby the Mother must

re-enter the home without the children born out of it. The Child must die, the sensitive Mother-worshipping Boy must be barred and the Step-daughter must go away. The Manager is persuaded to act as author for the drama and he goes with the characters into his office while the actors are granted a brief rest and the play is halted for twenty minutes. The Curtain remains up.

Act 2 The stage call-bell summons the acting company. The Step-daughter laments over the tragic fate which is to overtake the Child. The Manager orders the stage set to resemble as closely as possible the room at Madame Pace's atalier where the Father seduced the Step-daughter. When the Father and Step-daughter protest that the actors cannot be the characters, the Manager gives the Father and Step-daughter an opportunity to re-enact the scene as they did it and even Madama Pace herself appears upon the set. Immediately, a scene begins between her and the Step-daughter which is natural and impossibily conducted for the stage. When Madama Pace leaves in a huff because of the Mother's intervention, the Father and Step-daughter re-enact the scene which took place between them, prior to the seduction, and the Prompter takes it down in shorthand. When the actors of the company attempt to play the scene, the protests and derisive remarks of the Father and Step-daughter bring the

scene to a quick close. The Manager is impressed with the dramatic urge of the scene between the characters and he orders "Curtain" to mark the end of the act in the play being created, but the Stage-Manager takes him literally and the curtain descends upon the stage, leaving the Manager and the Father before the footlights.

Act 3 When the curtain goes up, the scenery has been shifted. The characters and the actors are present. The Manager and the Father indulge in a vigorous discussion regarding the philosophical interpretations of reality and unreality. The Step-daughter finally interrupts to insist that they proceed with the second act. She agrees to the Manager's suggestion of trees and a fountain for a background and the Manager finds they are already set. The Boy is placed behind the trees and the Child is led to the Fountain. At the Manager's direction, the Son refuses to begin the act, saying that he and his Mother had no scene of dissension and he is resentful at being forced to appear in the theatre. After leaving his Mother, he insists he went to the garden where he saw the Child fall into the fountain while the Boy watched her drown. The Step-daughter bends over the Child at the fountain, a revolver shot rings out from the trees, and the Father, the Manager and the actors throw themselves into an argument regarding the reality or illusion of the scene.

LAZARUS LAUGHED

Eugene O'Neill

An explanatory caption to the title of LAZARUS LAUGHED reads, "A Play for An Imaginative Theatre." The distinction is well stated for the play challenges the reader who attempts to visualize it as a production. The power and contagion of Lazarus' laughter rolls to joyous crescendos and back to haunting echoes and a casting director might well ponder on the ability of any actor to fulfill the expressions of joyousness so variedly and minutely described by Mr. O'Neill in the text.

The arrangement of the play in four acts, with two scenes to every act, merits only passing notice, but the use of masks to indicate the seven ages of life and types of human nature, as well as the function of a chorus, labels this drama as one which deserves attention.

In both scenes of Act 1, the masked crowd is divided into two groups, one of men and the other comprised of women. A more detailed description is quoted from the text: In each group "...there are seven periods of life shown: Boyhood (or Girlhood), Youth, Young Manhood (or Young Womanhood), Manhood (or Womanhood), Middle Age, Maturity and Old Age; and each of these periods is represented by seven different masks of general types of character as follows: The Simple, Ignorant; the Happy, Eager; the Self-Tortured, the Introspective; the Proud, Self-Reliant; the Servile, Hypocritical; the Revengeful, Cruel; the Sorrowful, Resigned.

Thus in each crowd.....there are forty-nine different combinations of period and type."¹

The Chorus of Old Men which functions in both scenes, comments on the action and admonishes the crowd, behaving as most choruses do - as a kind of group barometer. In Scene 1 the Chorus stands in the line of a crescent, facing Lazarus, and in the second scene the arrangement is in the formation of a spearhead turned toward Lazarus - a kind of prophetic warning of his doom. Throughout the play, the Chorus - although it assumes different guises, is always distinguished from the crowd by the double-size masks which its members wear.

Whereas the masks in Act 1 are cast in Semitic features, the masks and garments of the crowd in the first scene of Act 2 are characteristically Greek and the Chorus, composed of the Proud, Self-Reliant type in the period of Young Manhood, deck their wine stained bodies with the goat skins affected by followers of Dionysus. In Scene 2 of the same act, the Chorus includes Roman senators in the Servile, Hypocritical type of Old Age.

Seven guards form the Chorus in the first scene of Act 3 and in the following scene, three men and three women, wearing the masks of Youth, are organized into a Chorus which is completed by one woman of the Proud, Self-Reliant type. This odd member evidently symbolizes the dissenting Pompeia, mistress to Tiberius Caesar. In order to convey

1. Lazarus Laughed. Eugene O'Neill Horace Liveright
Edition. Pages 11-12



an impression of the characteristic debauchery of Caesar's court, the banqueting men guests are garbed in women's clothes and the women in masculine garments. Each sex has taken on the distinctive qualities of the other - the women's voices being harsh and deep and the men represented as being supercilious and effeminate.

The Chorus appears only at the end of the foregoing scene when it stands in awe at Lazarus' triumphant laughter as he bears the dead body of his beloved Miriam from the banquet hall. In the concluding scene of the play, the Chorus is inevitably present and in the persons of the Servile, Hypocritical type of Middle Age. Its members, together with the blood-thirsty, avaricious crowd which is packed on the tiers of the arena surrounding Caesar's throne, watch the slow, tortured death of Lazarus, the downfall of Tiberius and the alternate gloating and remorse of Caligula.

In ~~the~~^{his} discussion of THE GREAT GOD BROWN there is a quotation by Mr. R. Dana Skinner wherein he speaks of "the eternal laughter of Heaven" as being exemplified in that play. LAZARUS LAUGHED, which was evidently written in the same year (1925-26) is a fulfillment of that statement for Lazarus tells Miriam that "Death is dead and God the Father laughs." He seems to promise happiness in the medium of eternal youth for Lazarus grows younger in laughter and Miriam becomes aged and withered.

Perhaps the most impressive scene occurs when Lazarus

confronts the Roman Senate and as his laughter rises to a peak of exultation, it is echoed by his followers outside the gates who go to their death with the courage of Lazarus' joy on their lips and in their hearts. The evils and fears of unbelievers are more terrible in contrast to the purity of laughter which wells from the heart of Lazarus. Thus does Mr. O'Neill make that joyousness the symbol of faith and the release of human suffering.

Synopsis of LAZARUS LAUGHED

Act 1

Scene 1 Exterior and interior of Lazarus' home at Bethany.

The feasting guests fearfully regard the dreaming Lazarus who has just arisen from the dead. Upon the insistence of the guests, Lazarus reveals his faith in the life beyond the grave. By his exultant joy, Lazarus forces the company and the chorus to join him in a feast of laughter.

Scene 2 Exterior of Lazarus' home, now called the House of Laughter. Lazarus is thought to be insane because the people have left their fields to laugh with him. The laughter of Lazarus and his followers within the house affects the crowd outside which laughs uproariously until Lazarus appears and accuses the people of unholy mirth. News of Jesus' death is brought. Soldiers come to arrest Lazarus and in the fight which ensues between the Nazarenes and the Jews, the parents and sisters of Lazarus are slain. Lazarus goes with the soldiers but as he marches away, his laughter affects even the members of his guard and they join him.

Act 2

Scene 1 Athens. The Greeks, held under the oppression of the Roman soldiers, are prepared to welcome Lazarus as Dionysus when he passes on his way to Caesar.

With them are Crassus, the Roman General, and Caligula, the ugly heir to Tiberius Caesar. Caligula's lust for killing is terrible. When Lazarus comes, even Crassus and the soldiers are caught in his sweep of laughter but Caligula, in an impulse of hate, is unable to kill Lazarus for he goes to the chariot and learns from Lazarus that he loves to kill because he fears to die. As Lazarus is borne triumphantly away, Calugula essays a grotesque attempt at mirth.

Scene 2 In the portico of a temple within the Roman walls. The Roman Senate is assembled to pass judgment on Lazarus and his followers who remain outside the gates. Lazarus' face and bearing impress the senators and when he begins to laugh to his followers, the senators join him. The laughter is taken up by the soldiers who enter to tell how Lazarus' followers laughed as they slew themselves with the soldiers' weapons. The Senate and soldiers hail Lazarus as Caesar. Miriam, wife of Lazarus, laments the faith of the dead followers but Lazarus reiterates his creed in God as a Father who laughs.

Act 3

Scene 1 Exterior of Tiberius' villa-palace at Capri. Lazarus and Miriam obey the summons to Caesar's palace. Caligula attempts to terrorize Lazarus

but even the crucified lion over the archway draws pity but no fear from him. Marcellus, an emissary sent by Caesar, is powerless to kill Lazarus when his laughter rolls forth. Instead, as Lazarus and Miriam enter the palace, Marcellus turns his sword on himself.

Scene 2 The banquet hall in the palace of Tiberius.

Lazarus goes directly to the place where Caesar is hidden and calls him forth. Caesar is impressed by the laughing disciple but at the suggestion of Pompeia, his mistress, a piece of poisoned fruit is offered to Miriam in order to test Lazarus' power of laughter in her death. As Miriam dies, Lazarus seems stunned but Miriam's spirit flickers back for an instant to assure Lazarus that there is only life - and again, Lazarus laughs.

Act 4

Scene 1 The banquet hall. A few hours later. With the body of Miriam before them, Caesar, Caligula and Pompeia listen to the discourse of Lazarus and Caesar threatens death unless Lazarus reveals the secret of his eternal youthful laughter. Caligula begins to understand the message of Lazarus' joy and he goes off, laughing, momentarily purified and exalted. Pompeia offers her love to Lazarus, but finding that his love is

directed at humanity and not at herself as a woman, Pompeia claims he has betrayed Miriam and she rushes away to demand that Caesar torture Lazarus.

Scene 2 Lazarus is being burned alive. Unable to resist his power, Pompeia casts herself into the flames. Caesar, his unassailable power weakened, betrays the rulers of Rome by urging the people to forget their Caesars. Caligula, hearing, forgets his conversion of the night before, slays Tiberius and then stabs Lazarus. But his grandiose poise vanishes as remorse comes upon him and he begs forgiveness of the suffering but still courageous Lazarus: "Forgive me, Lazarus, men forget." The reader is left with the impression that Caligula will spend his life as a Caesar who continually forgets.

PROCESSIONAL

John Lawson

The author of PROCESSIONAL states his objective in the Preface of the play: "I have endeavored.....to lay the foundation of some sort of native technique, to reflect to some extent the color and movement of the American procession as it streams about us. The rhythm is staccato, burlesque, carried out by a formalized arrangement of jazz music. A point of attack so far removed from the usual theatre method naturally requires a new vision in directing, acting and scenic design."

This "Jazz Symphony of American Life", as the author has captioned his work, is divided into four acts and its motif is distinctly similar to that of vaudeville with a group of musical miners acting as a kind of chorus whose music establishes the mood of the scenes and the action.

As the synopsis of the play indicates, the scenes are presented against a painted backdrop which varies according to the locale of the action, and thus the vaudeville theme is carried further. The characters come and go in the casual but definite progression of the drama. Indeed, as one thinks of the movement of the play, one is surprised that the several sub-plots are so effectively coherent at the conclusion of the story. The prototypes of the people in the procession are found in hundreds of American communities.

The sign on Isaac Cohen's store front proclaims the

resourceful proprietor as a green grocer, an antiseptic barber, a purveyor of Kosher delicatessen and a dealer in mining tools. Cohen takes advantage of the approaching encounter between the militia and the miners to offer a special sale of guns at wholesale rates and the country's flag at cut prices. Pop Pratt, the Civil War veteran, constantly urges people to speak into his other ear and he ascribes any references to warfare as allusions to the war of Lincoln's day; Phillpots is a reporter who is always on the scent for sensational material and who makes his own news by starting something if the natural course of events is not sufficiently startling; the amusing "Big Sheriff with the Big Heart" wears a uniform more imposing than the man within it, he considers letters in foreign languages ^{as} good evidence because no one can read them and he labels a copy of "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" as Bolshevistic propaganda; the President of the Law and Order League quickly disappears when he finds himself in a situation where bullets are flying.

Back and forth they weave, in the great American procession, assembling again in the last scene where Psinski makes a well-meant but stupid speech in honor of Sadie's unborn child; The President of the League of Law and Order announces the mining officials will meet the strikers halfway (although to the Sheriff he confides that the marked men will be slain that night); the Sheriff, as foggy as ever about legal procedure, fixes a dog license to use for the marriage certificate; and Phillpots utters the usual

ballyhoo of the press when a crisis has been met and passed - Industrial Peace will come, the Nation is rejoicing, there will be coal to keep everyone warm, et cetera.

The Semitic race, the Press, capitalistic forces, protective orders and associations (including the Ku Klux Klan) and the brotherhood of man are targets for satire in the play. However, the author's final note is struck in idealism, for in contrast to the discordant, blaring music of the jazz wedding, Sadie pledges, "I'm gonna raise my kid, sing to him soft - ."

Synopsis of PROCESSIONAL

Act 1 The action is presented against a backdrop on which is painted a typical city block, showing a nondescript hotel, a moviehouse, a quick lunch, et cetera. Isaac Cohen's cut-rate store is in the centre. The day is the Fourth of July and trouble among the miners furnishes the revolving point of the action. This first act is a kind of procession, the participants in which have their counterparts in hundreds of American communities. Word comes of an impending encounter between the state militia and the strikers. Against the vaudeville background, the following persons come and go: Isaac Cohen, a Jewish storekeeper; his simpering daughter, Sadie; Pop Pratt, a Civil War relic; Phillpots, an energetic newspaper reporter; the Sheriff; Jake Psinski, the leader of the Jazz Miners, the Head of the League of Law and Order, old Maggie, whose grandson, Jim Flimmins is in jail for his activities in behalf of the Proletariat; the Jazz Miners and the soldiers.

Act 2

Scene 1 The backdrop is the wall and the window of the jail. A coffin is beneath the window. Old Maggie and Jim's mother come to console him for his captivity but Jim threatens to get free. After the women leave, Jim twists two window bars from their supports,

leaps from the cell and hides himself in the coffin. The Sheriff and two soldiers, Bill and McCarthy, seeing the broken bars, set forth to search for the prisoner and Jim persuades Psinski and his companion, a negro named Rastus, to carry him in the coffin to the Labor Temple on the hill. The lights go down, the distant miners play a jazz funeral march and the voices of Psinski and Rastus become the voices

of

Scene 2 Bill and McCarthy who appear with the Sheriff as the moon comes up and the Labor Temple is revealed. Again, a kind of processional takes place: The Sheriff and soldiers go off to continue their search; Phillpots and Sadie, engaging in a mild flirtation, come and go; Psinski and Rastus bring in Jim and the coffin which they secrete in the shadows and the miners depart; the soldiers come again and listen to the sounds of drunken laughter and revelry from the Temple; Phillpots comes again and deplores the idealism and the disillusion with which men invest women; when the place is empty, Jim comes out of the coffin and meets Sadie; Bill returns and charges Jim who runs a bayonet through Bill's body and then kneels, remorsefully beside the dead body as the drunken laughter from the Temple continues.

Act 3

Scene 1 The barn where Mrs. Flimmins and Maggie make their home. Jim and Psinski, eluding the soldiers, appear and beg to be hidden. They are secreted in an opening beneath a trapdoor in the floor. Isaac Cohen follows the Sheriff into the barn and orders the arrest of Boob, the newsboy, for theft; Sadie is scolded by her father for a flirtation with Boob, the soldiers recognize Mrs. Flimmins as the woman in the temple, the night before; Cohen and the soldiers leave; Mrs. Flimmins gets the Sheriff out of the barn by a ruse while Sadie raises the trapdoor and delivers a note to Jim from the miners; McCarthy notices the trapdoor and Psinski is discovered and taken off to jail and after everyone but Mrs. Flimmins has gone, Jim appears and reviles his mother for her profession. Again, the processional has passed.

Scene 2 Evening of the same day. A mine entrance. A drop curtain represents the usual mine structure with derricks, cranes, et cetera. Shooting is heard for the miners are fighting. Phillpots enters with Sadie but refuses to take her away with him. After he has left her, Jim comes in and deaf to Sadie's entreaties, he resolves to have his way with her as he carries her into the mine.

Act 4 Six months later. A hill near the town. The Jazz Wedding. The Ku Klux Klan is active and Mrs. Flimmins

and Sadie watch the burning of the barn which has sheltered them for several months. Members of the Ku Klux Klan enter to accuse Mrs. Flimmings and Sadie of immorality. For a brief interval, they are intrigued by the jazz rhythm of Sadie's body but then they turn and hurl scathing epithets at her. The Klan bears Sadie away but she is rescued and brought back by her father who has donned the disguise in order to protect her. The Jazz Miners appear, followed by Jim whom the Klan has blinded in an attempt to hang him. When Mrs. Flimmings tells Jim of Sadie's expected baby of which he is the father, Jim agrees to marry her and preparations are made for an immediate wedding. All the principal characters of the first act appear, the jazz wedding goes on and dancing becomes merry. In the form of a procession, the people march through the audience as Boob rushes about selling papers that scream of the peace between miners and employers. The musical miners continue their playing as the procession moves from sight. Only Sadie and Jim are left together on the stage.

STRANGE INTERLUDE

Eugene O'Neill

STRANGE INTERLUDE, which Mr. R. Dana Skinner calls "A songless tragedy", is presented in two parts, with Part One containing five acts and Part Two divided into four acts. When presented on the stage, the play begins late in the afternoon and a dinner intermission occurs at the end of Part One. For the modern theatre, this drama marks an innovation, although Mr. O'Neill's subsequent trilogy, *MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA*, follows the same manner of presentation.

In addition to the arrangement of acts and intermission, this play is noted for its *aparts* and soliloquies. Throughout the drama, the characters, of course, address remarks to each other in the manner of usual dialogue. Beside this dialogue, the text contains speeches which are for the enlightenment of the audience and unheard by the other persons of the play. These *aparts* have several purposes: they reveal the real thoughts and reactions of the characters speaking, thus often giving the characters' spoken words a paradoxical effect; they permit the reader or audience to know the underlying feelings of the characters even though their utterances are totally different; and they allow the audience to follow the development and intricacies of the characters' reasoning and to witness the effects of external stimuli upon moods and actions.

< This play is another utilization of the theory

employed by Mr. O'Neill when he uses masks for character expression. The masks indicate the multi-faceted personalities of the persons who wear them, whereas in STRANGE INTERLUDE the subconscious and silent thoughts of the characters act as validifying checks upon what they actually say to each other.

Nina, that strange, ruthless and terrifying woman, can utter words of tenderness and love to her husband, while her aparts reveal a repulsion which is deadly to his happiness. The boy Gordon can be impressed with his mother's apparently sincere words to him and then he can be frightened off her lap by the savage intensity of her inner thoughts. The apparently cool and detached attitude between Nina and Darrell when they are in the presence of other people, is a mere foil for the seething and passionate development of their attraction and emotion. The revelations which occur when the scene is apparently a quiet one, make unforgettable impressions.

Mr. O'Neill borrows two theological tenets and uses them for his own ends. He lets Nina assert that "God is a woman" and later, when Nina is happy and confident in her domination of the three men who are attracted to her - Sam her husband, Dr. Darrell, her lover, and Charles Marsden whom she regards as a father - Mr. O'Neill goes as far as to allow Nina to call this group her trinity. This comparison is rather startling and one wonders if the playwright will eventually develop a drama along the lines of

a feminine godhead. If the writer's recollection is correct, Mr. O'Neill speaks again of the femininity of God in DYNAMO.

Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn concisely states: "Nina has no heart - and the sensuality of the persons in the play is cold. The most lovable person, Sam, is presented with a chill contempt.....They all love - horribly.....This lack of love, both creative and created, this lack of tenderness and warmth, has been partly concealed and partly compensated for by the breadth of O'Neill's intellectual sympathies."¹

The title of the play is found in the words of Nina when she says: "Strange interlude! Yes, our lives are merely strange dark interludes in the electric display of God the Father!"² Again, she observes: ".....the only living life is in the past and the future.....the present is an interlude.....strange interlude in which we call on past and future to bear witness we are living!"³ Mr. O'Neill's detailed and meticulous personal and stage descriptions are no small parts in his attempt to convey situation and character. He associates dirt and disorder with lack of ambition and despair and in contrast to this symbolism, order and harmony in the setting usually indicate that affairs are bright for the persons of his story. In Act 2, the drawn, flesh-colored window shades convey an

1. Expression in America. Ludwig Lewisohn Page 546

2,3. Strange Interlude. Eugene O'Neill Pages 351,288

impression of closed and lifeless eyelids - thus establishing the mood of the scene and symbolizing the dead Professor Leeds. Even Marsden - "Dear old Charlie" - who moves through the play like a shaggy but harmless and gentle dog - is a barometer of Nina's emotional conditions as well as the refuge to which she ultimately goes.

Synopsis of STRANGE INTERLUDE

Act 1

The library of Professor Leed's home in a small university town in New England. Charles Marsden, recently returned from abroad, calls on Professor Leeds as his daughter, Nina, determines to leave her father and to enter training for a nurse in a distant city. Nina has become neurotic in her resentment toward her father who refused to let her marry her war-time sweetheart before he went across to what proved to be his death.

Act 2

More than a year later. Professor Leed's study. Professor Leeds is dead and Marsden awaits the arrival of Nina. After she has come and gone to her father's room, Marsden learns from Sam Evans, one of her escorts, that he is in love with Nina and wants Marsden's support in the suit. Later, Dr. Darrell, Nina's other companion endorses Sam Evans' petition. When he and Nina are alone, Marsden, although he has long loved Nina and hoped that now she would turn to him in her bereavement, suggests to her that she marry Sam and half asleep on the arm of his chair, Nina assents.

Act 3

Several months later. The dining room in the Evans home. Nina is to become a mother and she writes to Dr. Darrell concerning her happy news. Mrs. Evans, Sam's mother, suspecting Nina's condition, contrives to talk with Nina

alone and learning of Nina's potential motherhood, she warns Nina not to bear the child because Sam's family is marked by insanity - his father was insane and his aunt is affected. Naturally, Nina is stunned with horror and suggests that she leave Sam but Mrs. Evans tells Nina that such an action would drive Sam mad but she suggests that as Sam does not know of the expected child, Nina should rid herself of it and have a child by a normal man. Thus she will fulfill her own desire for a child and give happiness to Sam. Nina acknowledges Mrs. Evans' advice.

Act 4

Professor Leeds' study. Seven years later. Confusion and disorder are rampant in the room which Sam now uses for a study in which to conduct his unsuccessful advertisement writing. Nina is drawn and thin from her recent illness, the convalescence of which has been slow. Marsden, who in collaborating with Nina is engaged on a biography of the dead Gordon, reflects the nervousness of both Nina and Sam. Dr. Darrell arrives for a visit and when he and Nina are alone, she reminds him of his prescription for her - that she marry and have a child. Nina tells Darrell of Sam's heritage, the destruction of the child she would have had by him but for Mrs. Evans' suggestion of a solution to make everyone happy. Finally, Dr. Darrell, succumbing to Nina's attraction, agrees to be the father of her child.

Act 5

A small house which the Evanses have rented near the sea shore. Nina is happy at the prospect of her child. She is evasive with Sam when he shows a tenderness or affection to her for she has fallen in love with Dr. Darrell. Marsden, who comes in to receive consolation for the recent death of his mother is conscious of the attraction that is between Nina and Darrell. When they are alone, Darrell tells Sam that he (Sam) is to become a father and then he bids the delighted husband adieu and announces his immediate departure for Europe. Nina, coming in after Darrell has gone, is distracted at the news and although she feels maternal tenderness for Sam, she yearns for Darrell.

Part 2 Act 6

The same as Act 5. A year later. Sam and Nina appear happy and contented and their home gives the appearance of modest prosperity. Only Marsden is more nervous and haggard than ever. He still suspects Nina and Darrell - although the latter has not been heard from since he went to Europe. However, Darrell appears on the scene and when he and Nina are alone, it is impossible to conceal their love for each other and Darrell urges Nina to divorce Sam and marry him. Nina refuses to do this, reminding Darrell that the prescription of marriage with Sam and a baby were suggested by him. She suggests that she become Darrell's mistress and when Darrell, in front of Sam is challenged by Nina to tell the truth about their affair, he is unable

to do so and Nina is in complete domination of the three men who love her - Sam, Darrell and Marsden.

Act 7

Eleven years later. The sitting room of the Evans apartment on Park Avenue. Darrell and Marsden have prospered with Sam in his business ventures. Nina and Darrell are still in love with each other but they have reached the stage when Darrell's occasional visits from his biological research laboratory in the West Indies usually terminate on a clashing note. Affection between Sam and eleven year old Gordon is deep but the child has a bitter antipathy for his own father, Darrell. Alternatingly, he trusts and distrusts his mother with that penetrating sensitiveness peculiar to some children. The end of the act is the signal for Darrell's leave-taking for his laboratory and Nina's wish that Sam could know the truth of their situation.

Act 8

An afternoon in late June. Ten years later. Aboard the Evans' motor cruiser which is anchored with other yachts near the finish line at Poughkeepsie. Nina has grown old and bitterly possessive. She has lost the love of Darrell who has just returned from his island laboratory and who has been summoned to be among the guests who are watching Nina's son, Gordon, row in the race. Nina is jealous of Madeline, the girl to whom Gordon is engaged and who is a

member of the party, At Nina's insistence, Darrell refuses to tell Sam the truth about Gordon's parentage so that she can break off the engagement between Gordon and Madeline. Darrell's intervention and explanation that Nina is not herself, prevents Nina from telling Madeline about Gordon. In a frenzy of jealousy, Nina tells Marsden who is thrilled at her confidence in him. The race is concluded with Gordon's boat the winner and amid the rejoicing, Nina's hysterical prating about Gordon so startles Sam that he suffers from a stroke. Nina, repenting her impulse, vows to be kind to him and to refrain from meddling between her son and Madeline.

Act 9

The terrace of the Evans' estate on Long Island. Several months later. Sam is dead and Gordon tells Madeline he expects his mother to marry Darrell. Gordon and Madeline are about to leave by airplane and Marsden summons Nina and Darrell to bid them goodbye. A dispute takes place between Darrell and Gordon but Nina brings about an apology. The young people leave, Darrell offers a formal proposal of matrimony to Nina who refuses him and, turning to Marsden, asks him to marry her. This is the great moment of Marsden's life and as Darrell leaves them, Gordon's plane circles overhead before it disappears and Marsden and Nina dream of their return to the old house in the college town.

THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Paul Claudel

THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, an unusually beautiful, lyrical drama of Columbus' struggles in Spain, is divided into two parts, each with many episodes^{and} divisions which this writer, for the purpose of convenience, has designated as scenes. Directions for the stage proper are lacking and the reader is called upon to exercise ingenuity. However, it is certain that a cinema screen is the medium for much of the action as characters, events, symbols and moods flit across it.

The drama utilizes pageantry, pantomime, dumb-show and music as well as a Chorus, a Reader and expressionistic settings. The moods range from farcical humor to gripping beauty or sheer tragedy as the play moves from realism to symbolism, and back again, in time spans of brief moments.

It seems hardly necessary to state that M. Paul Claudel is ranked with the foremost symbolists. Mr. Ashley Dukes affirms: ".....He (Claudel) approaches history only to strike a chord between the known and the imagined.....He is the interpreter of the symbolic thought.....Claudel is his own arbiter, for he lives himself in the world he has imagined, and its reason or unreason invites no outward scrutiny."¹

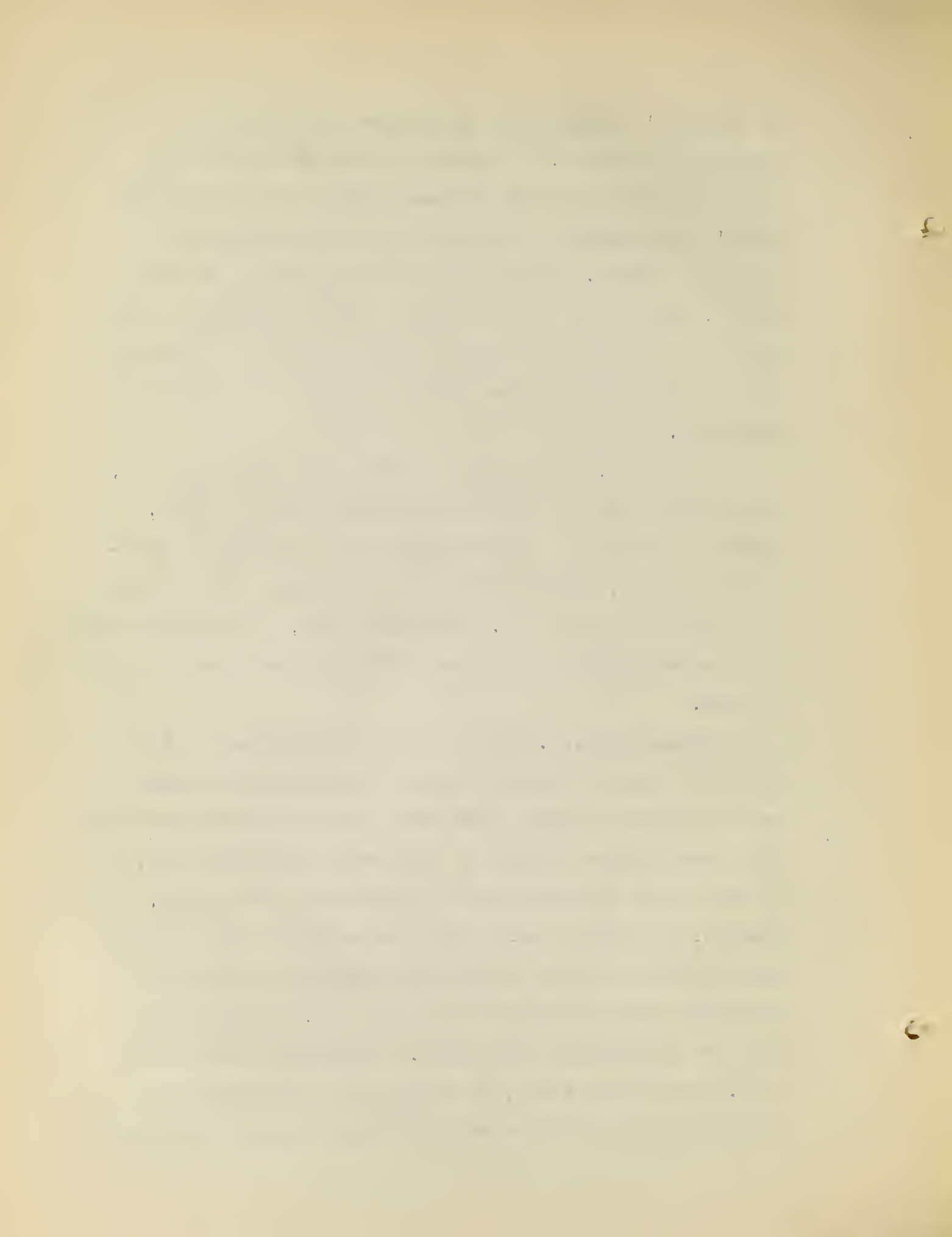
This drama presents not only the valorous chronicles

1. The Youngest Drama. Ashley Dukes. Pages 149-150

of Columbus' idealism and adventures, but like the minutia² of a mosaic, it gathers up the extraneous, unimportant and even petty incidents which accompanied Columbus' struggles for recognition and the opportunity to prove his theory. Despite the trends of chaos and confusion, the pattern is convincing and Christopher Columbus moves as a pitiable and heroic figure against a background which is plausible because of its reality and penetrating symbolism.

The Chorus, occasionally divided into Semi-Choruses, has a grandstand or front row seat and misses nothing. Choruses have never been characterized by modest or reticent qualities, and the Chorus of this drama fulfills the functions expected of it. Chameleon-like, it assumes various group personalities and forms in order to be a part of the picture.

Occasionally, M. Claudel is so carried away by his symbolism that he forgets to take the bewildered reader by the hand and explain just when the stage action ends and the cinema action begins, if they occur simultaneously, or if they cease altogether while the Chorus holds forth. However, in order to make clear the conflict which arises when Columbus is torn between his idealism and the disparaging popular opinion surrounding him, the playwright uses two Christopher Columbuses. Christopher Columbus 1, as M. Claudel calls him, is perplexed by the misunderstandings and opposition he encounters whereas Christopher



Columbus 2 is the brave personality who feels the urge to go forth and prove his theories. A note of beauty is effectively placed when Christopher Columbus 1, the target of the money-lenders' jeers, pleads: "I have no money. Only gold! All the setting sun's uncoined gold I give to you" - and the thoughts of Christopher Columbus 2 travel swiftly along the Western highway of water made golden by the dropping sun.

The description of the new land in Scene 18 of Part 2 cannot be effectively repeated without some recourse to the author's own words. Tropical growth is visible and it surrounds a two faced head built of stones around which is entwined a huge living snake. Through the media of musical instruments and the Chorus, the undertones of America are heard. On the skyline are seen the approaching ships. "With the profound mingled murmur of land, sea and forest, in which the feeling of awe and of hope is felt more and more, the song of the 'Te Deum' begins to be heard from afar. The ships approach, vomiting flames and smoke, while the cannons roar and the Royal Banner of Castile is unfolded at the high mast. The song of the 'Te Deum' is distinctly heard... 'Sanctus.... Sanctus..... Sanctus....' The shouts of the sailors are heard among the howling of the gods in the far distance." Truly an impressive scene!

The last scene of the drama is wholly symbolical. Isabella, poor in worldly goods because she has given all to Columbus, commands that the faithful mare belonging to

the dying adventurer be brought to her that she may ride into Heaven on it. Because this scene represents the Paradise of the Idea which precedes entry into the Paradise of Love, everybody and everything in it, including Columbus' steed, are decked in crystal and silver. Heaven is represented at the rear of the stage and as Isabella and her attendants, bearing lighted candles, go toward it, the author's vivid description beggars this writer's average power over words.

"The scenery is riven through the middle and rolled back like a piece of stuff. It is as if a series of envelopes opened, one after the other; as if veil after veil were withdrawn. The blue and starry night appears. In the blue space is seen in darker blue the oblique shape of both Americas tied to each other by the knot of the Isthmus of Panama. On the back screen, darker on dark blue, the colossal shape of Santiago appears in pilgrim's dress, with hat, staff and shells. The stars of Orion's constellation are seen here and there on his body....He is sunk higher than his knees in the ocean."

As the sky blossoms into myriad stars, "The doves are crowding at the feet of the Queen of Angels.....Black on black among the teeming stars is seen the shape of the Virgin with the Child.....A light is increasing at the nether part of the back screen in which is seen revolving the upper part of the earth's globe. A dove flies away from it and crosses space. Everything fades, leaving

only the dove. The Chorus sings deeply and triumphantly,
'Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!'"

To attempt an interpretation of all the symbolism in the twenty-odd episodes of this play is impossible. When the drama divests itself of gossamer idealism and sinks to the depths of stark realism, it moves so swiftly that it reminds one of a ship which slips in and out of vision as it makes its way through banks of fog. Momentarily, the vessel is visible but almost immediately, it is a phantom in the fog and the observer must follow its path with "The mind's eye" until it is seen again. So the reader of this drama, who tries to place a finger on an episode and say, "This is reality" finds that the incident eludes her, only to reappear, fantastically surrounded by greater symbolism.

Synopsis of THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Part 1

Scene 1

"ProceSSIONal." In the procession are soldiers, standard-bearers with the banners of Aragon and Castile, a youth bearing THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, The Reader, a Chorus of men and women. Musicians assemble, the Book is mounted on a pulpit, silence is called and the Reader announces the legend of Christopher Columbus who discovered America.

Scene 2

The Reader offers a prayer to ask guidance for interpreting the Book of the life and travels of Christopher Columbus. On the screen at the back of the stage is a sphere revolving through chaos and darkness with a dove flying above it.

Scene 3

The Chorus sings of the void and shapelessness of the earth and of the darkness over the waters where the Spirit of God hovers in the shape of a dove.

Scene 4

"The Inn at Valladolid." As Columbus is unpacking his few possessions, he finds some chains.

Scene 5

"Christopher Columbus and Posterity." The Reader and the Chorus urge Columbus to cross the line of death and see

what Posterity and the Judgment of Men think of his contribution to the ages. As an Accuser warns Columbus to beware of the rights of free criticism, the Chorus begs the adventurer to leave the desolation of his chains in order to witness his own story.

Scene 6

The Four Quadrilles. The Reader narrates Columbus' pilgrimage to the King of Spain. Queries between the Reader and the Chorus interpret the Four Quadrilles as the cruel idols Envy, Ignorance, Pride and Avarice. An argument arises between the Accuser who defends the King of Spain and the Defender who deploras the sacrifice of genius to the "chessboard of bureaucracy." Finally, Christopher Columbus rises to defend his name against the slander directed at it.

Scene 7

The Doves. "The scene is filled with a whirlwind of white wings which drive away the wild grotesque figures of the Quadrilles. Somebody has captured one of the doves."

Scene 8

The court of Isabella the Catholic. Evidently, the screen is utilized for this exposition and Isabella the child is shown holding court in one of the gardens of Aragon. The Moorish Sultan enters and presents Isabella with a dove imprisoned in a cage. Isabella graciously accepts the gift, takes the dove in her hand, ties her ring to its

leg and sets it free. The bird flies away.

Scene 9

"The Dove above the Sea." (On the screen)

Scene 10

"The Call." The Reader describes the boyhood home of Columbus and as Columbus sits reading THE BOOK OF THE TRAVELS OF MESSER MARCO POLO, there is thrown on the screen a blurred presentation of the components of the Marco Polo story - camels, ships, the palace of the Mogul Emperor, et cetera. The Chorus represents the Man at the Window who urges Columbus to forget the travels of Marco Polo. A dove on the screen is seen as a dove with a ring tied to its leg enters the house.

Scene 11

"Christopher Columbus at Land's End." From an old sailor, half dead and tied to the figurehead of a wrecked ship, Columbus demands if there is land to the westward and after he has leaned eagerly over the old man and tried to make him speak, the sailor dies.

Scene 12

"Pay Your Debts, Christopher." The Reader tells of Columbus' failures, his marriage, the disbelief with which he meets in Lisbon, and his appearance before his creditors. The setting sun makes a highway to the West and when Columbus wonders how long a time must elapse before he can follow that highway, he receives only hoots and jeers from the Chorus, his creditors and the guitar players outside

his window.

Scene 13

"Christopher Columbus storm the King of Spain." He is unable to reach the presence of the King because he cannot buy his way past the Marshal and the doors which separate him from the monarch.

Scene 14

Isabella and Santiago. Isabella prays in the church. She is grateful that Spain has been delivered from the Moors and she places herself and the kingdom ^{as} ~~or~~ tools in the hands of the Almighty. The Chorus calls her attention to the fading image of Santiago with a dove over his head and reminds Isabella of how she wed the sea when she was a child and that same ring which she tied to the leg of a dove was carried by a man who approached to ask her to make him king of another world. The recollection of the ring and the significance of Christopher's name, Christ-bearer, arouse Isabella to action.

Scene 15

The Recruits at the port of Cadiz in Spain. Ridicule is directed at the rotten ships, the poor food and the rough sailors which Columbus employs for his expedition. The crowd speculates at the money invested and the patronage of Isabella.

Scene 16

"The Gods Churn the Sea." The monsters of darkness and confusion prepare to work their evils upon the ocean,

Columbus' ships, men and supplies.

Scene 17

The Mutiny. The Reader describes the monotony of the sea and the unrest among the men on Christopher Columbus' ships. The delegates, representing the officers and the men of the three ships, fail to move Columbus by their pleas, defiant words and threats to give the order for the ships to turn back. As Columbus issues orders for a feast on the remaining meat and wine, a dove appears and the lookout in the upper rigging calls, "Land Ho!"

Scene 18

"The Redeemer." This scene is quoted in the discussion of the play.

Part 2

Entr' Acte

Christopher Columbus' discovery has traveled far. The Reader returns to the pulpit and tells of Columbus' triumphant return to Spain and then of the disappointments because no gold and but a few pearls were found. Mistrust and enemies are everywhere. The hour of trial is at hand and the King has sought the advice of Three Wise Men, his councillors.

Scene 1

The King of Spain and the Three Wise Men. The Queen is very ill but she sends her intercession for Columbus. The Wise Men hint that Columbus has not justified the expense of his expedition and that the people make too much of him.

It is better that he should be forgotten.

Scene 2

Discussion. The Chorists remonstrate with the Reader because the scene of Columbus' triumphant return has been omitted from the narrative. The reader tells of the explorer's return, in chains, after his third voyage.

Scene 3

"Christopher Holds the Mast." Christopher is chained to the mast and a storm is raging over the waters. The Captain comes to entreat him to hold the mast that the ship may be saved. Christopher, fortified by words from St. John and faith in himself, keeps the ship from foundering in the storm.

Scene 4

"Within a soul." The soul is the conscience of Christopher Columbus who sees on the screen the conditions which the discovery of the new land has brought about. Slaves are forced into chains and men are sold as cattle. Columbus, defending himself by asserting that he has sinned but as he had no gold he had to pay with something, reminds the Chorus that he, himself, is in chains and that the way to progress is marked by suffering. Columbus' conscience, represented by a Shadow, appears to reproach him and to point out that he cannot bind the universe together for a wretched Italian, Amerigo Vespucci, has given his name to the New World which Columbus discovered."

Scene 5

The Reader announces the arrival of the ship and Queen Isabella's messenger overjoys Columbus with an account of the Queen's faith in him and his pilgrimages. The happiness that Columbus feels turns to remorse and frustration when the funeral cortege of Isabella approaches. But Columbus retains his faith in his discovery.

Scene 6

The Inn in Valladolid. Columbus is dying. The Innkeeper would take away Columbus' mule in payment of his bill, but Columbus begs that his faithful beast be left with him.

Scene 7

"In the Paradise of the Idea." The paradise of the idea precedes entry into the paradise of love. The scene is the same beautiful garden at Majorca (Part 1, Scene 8) but everything, trees, flowers and people are in silver and crystal. Isabella is like the child of the other scene. Remembering that she has nothing with which to buy her entrance into Heaven, she sends for Columbus' poor mule, even though she hears it is his last possession. Mounted on the mule, which has been changed to crystal and white, Isabella and her Chorus move toward the rear of the stage which eventually reveals the Eternal Doors of Heaven.

THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

Paul Raynal

THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR is one of the most beautiful plays the writer has encountered during the research for this thesis. The synopsis of the plot is devoid of distinction for the atmosphere and characterization, not the situation, make the activity in this drama. The play is divided into three acts, the first act having six scenes after the French fashion, and the second and third sets comprised of one scene each. There are only three characters: The Father, the Soldier and Aude whom the Soldier loves. The names of the Father and the Soldier, as well as the surname of Aude, are not listed. Even the few stage directions are impressively brief when the setting of Act 1 is described: "A room. Night. Lamps."

One of the distinctive qualities of the play is the simplicity and realism of its staccato lines, most of which are only one sentence in length or merely two or three words. When longer speeches occur, they are extensive and a few exceed twenty lines.

The idealism of love and life are expressed in exquisite poetic fervor and the unwitting cruelty of persons who love each other forms a bitter and revealing contrast. The Soldier, the Father and Aude are symbols of thousands of men and women like them, although few persons rise to the nobility of spirituality attained by the lovers in this play.

The Soldier is a lonely man for he is a person whom no one really knows, an individual whose conflict of idealism and realism is never understood, a man who clings to the few remaining beautiful things of life in order to keep himself from spiritual chaos and depravation. He is the unimportant soldier who sacrifices everything for love - love of country and love of a woman - and whose love of country is the beacon which enables him to make sacrifices that womanhood might be safe. To the soldier, war is a debauched and utterly useless remedy for the misunderstandings of mankind. The glamorous surface of it, with banners, music and bravado, covers a foundation of inhuman destruction and objectives. The latter illusion was the Father's view of war for the parent believed his son should be grateful for the opportunity to serve in a capacity which would be gloriously recognized when the fighting was over and peace had settled like scars on the face of the world.

Professor Chandler's comment on THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR is symbolically expressed and in keeping with the fine psychological movement of the play: ".....the youth departs to die. Here the very brevity of life enhances its value, and its flower is love - a love to be plucked even in the shadow of death."¹

1. Modern Continental Playwrights. Frank W. Chandler P. 242

The symbols of crucifixion and sacrifice are startlingly carried out in several instances. In the second act, the light of the dawn throws the pattern of the window bars on the wall "in a livid cross". Later, in the same scene, when Aude, exhausted by the tension and emotion of the last few hours, sleeps, the text describes the Soldier's position as "He leans his back against the cross of the window with outstretched hands and sunken head; and in the clear light of morning he weeps, weeps, weeps, as though his heart would break."

Finally, at the end of the play, when the Soldier takes his leave, the Father and Aude follow him to the door, the Father murmuring continuously, "I want you" alternated by Aude sobbing, "I love you!" At the door, the Soldier pauses to utter the words which fall like a benediction upon those he is leaving - a benediction which the war dead have left for their living comrades: "Be happy." Then Aude, "livid and rigid, stands stiffened against the wall as if she were tied to the stake."

In a day when the problem of divorce raises havoc with social theories, the sacredness of wifedom, as explained by the Soldier to Aude, in Act 2, is one of the most gripping passages of its kind in modern drama.

Throughout the play the moods of the Soldier and Aude are as beautifully flitting as migratory birds against a sunset for each lover is as finely attuned as a sensitive instrument, the lightest touch on which will awaken melody at once sad and sweet.

Synopsis of THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

Act 1

- Scene 1 "The First Words for More than a Year." The Father and Aude bid a tremulous welcome to the returning Soldier. Aude is the Soldier's sweetheart who lives with his Father while he is at the front. She is bereft of her parents. The Soldier is apprehensive that there might be a telegram awaiting him, but he is reassured that there is none so he plans to remain at home for four days. He is to be married to Aude on this leave but she tells him she has sent the guests home and she will recall the priest, later. The Son and Father talk of the dead wife and Mother as Aude slips from the room.
- Scene 2 The Son and the Father. They speak of Aude's bravery and understanding. The Soldier is touched at Aude's devotion to him. The conversation flows along the lines of war , its universal effects and relation to men's illusions. Aude returns.
- Scene 3 "Return Immediately." The Soldier asks Aude if something is not being kept from him and she gives him a telegram which demands his immediate return to the front. The telegram came before his arrival but the Father and Aude wished him to have a little happiness before telling him of the summons. The

Soldier is evasive when they ask why he is wanted. He has but four hours to spend at home and that is why Aude postponed the wedding ceremony. Although the Soldier wishes the nuptials could take place, Aude affirms her love is binding.

Scene 4 The Father and Aude. The Soldier has gone from the room. Aude and the Father, realizing his disappointment over his recall, promise each other, in their deep understanding and tenderness, to make the Soldier's four hours an eternity of happiness.

Scene 5 "Nothing in their life but the moment
Nothing in the world but their hearts"
The Soldier, attempting to capture a festival mood during his brief visit, has donned full evening clothes, but noticing the fatigue which his Father shows, he urges both the older man and Aude to get some sleep. After much gentle chiding, the Father starts off, with Aude's promise that she will come later.

Scene 6 "The Purest of All Marriages." Aude and the Soldier are alone. The Soldier is touched by Aude's offer of love and he drinks a toast to the presence of his unseen comrades whom he wishes to include in the pledging of his marriage sacrament. Aude and the Soldier give way to laughter and pretend there is no war.

Act 2

"The Wedding Bed". The Soldier and Aude have consummated their love and now they talk before the fire in her room. Their attempt to keep their promise to each other and refrain from any unhappy allusions is swept aside for Aude, justifying herself by asserting that complete love deserves full confidence, learns from her lover that the war is not drawing to a close and that victory is not certain. Aude reveals that pity as well as love was the motive of her surrender to the Soldier, and the Soldier, hurt at this confession, tells Aude that he acquired his leave by promising to volunteer as the soldier who would throw hand grenades in the attack on the following Friday. No other man would offer, the honor of the company was at stake and the company Commander allowed the Soldier a gambling chance to see Aude once more by granting a leave which was almost sure to be revoked. In a heart-rending declaration, the Soldier tells how much women mean to men at the front and how the memory of Aude had sustained him. Aude and the Soldier are brought together in a rush of emotion which is terminated by the dawn light throwing the pattern of the window bars into relief upon the wall. They break their crucified ecstasy and Aude sleeps as the Soldier, bitterly alone, sobs out his heart as the morning grows brighter.

Act 3

"Zenith." The same room as Act 1. The Father comes in and tenderly greets Aude. He speaks enviously of the Soldier's

good fortune in protecting his country and sharing in the honor when the war ends. Then, growing curious, he learns that Aude spent the intervening hours with the Soldier and his resentment flares against his son. Misunderstanding arises between the men for the Soldier realizes that his Father, wrapped in his life and pastimes with Aude, cannot understand the horror and emptiness of war. Aude's demand that the Father ask the Soldier's forgiveness for the harshness between them, leads to a reconciliation of the Father and his son - a reconciliation which is a brave attempt to heal the horrible wounds caused by the Father's diffidence and his absorption in Aude. The time of departure is near and Aude's shining courage moves the Soldier to promise that he will try to live. Aude's ecstasy toward her sweetheart mounts to a reverence which is almost a deification. The moment of departure comes and with cries of love, the Father and Aude watch the Soldier go.

MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA

Eugene O'Neill

Speaking of MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA, Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn makes a sweeping statement when he asserts that this modern trilogy is concerned with "the universality of the incest-wish in the heart of man."¹ Again he observes: "In MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA there is once more the harshness and the absence of love, the lack of warmth, goodness or pity for those who lack these things that disfigures the power and the striving of O'Neill."²

Undoubtedly, Mr. O'Neill has done a forceful piece of work, but why has he chosen the New England of 1865 as his locale and why does he specify Greek portico architecture on an otherwise New England house? Even more inexplicable than the foregoing problems, why does the playwright filch Mannon from the Greek Agamemnon as the surname for his New England family? Nor does he overlook the given names of the Greek source. Clytemnestra suggests Christine; Orin is substituted for Orestes; and Aegisthus, by virtue of its "A", gives place to Adam Brant. Only Lavinia's name does not seem to be suggested by the original Electra unless the "L" is reminiscent of the fated Greek heroine. The title of the play is derived from the words of Orin when he says, "Death becomes the Mannons."

The euphony of the captioned parts in the trilogy is

awkward for they read, THE HOMECOMING, THE HUNTED, THE HAUNTED and the titles of the latter two parts might well be changed. The first act in each part of the play takes place outside the Mannon home and the person who has seen a performance of the drama knows that the background is indelible for it becomes a sinister and brooding witness to the tragedy unfolded before and within it. Only one act of the drama takes place away from the Mannon home. Act 4 of Part 2 has Adam Brant's clipper ship for a setting and Mr. O'Neill cannot resist bringing in a chantyman who, along with the exposition, is able to render the speech and the music of a sea-roving man. It might be noted, in passing, that the playwright supplies this drama, as many of his others, with a liberal amount of moonlight. That obliging heavenly body always makes an appearance when Mr. O'Neill sets a scene out-of-doors.

Mr. Louis Goldberg has stated that Mr. O'Neill's women do not understand their men-folk.¹ May one be permitted to ask how any man could understand the eccentric and fiercely possessive women which Mr. O'Neill so frequently presents? In the latter case, it would be a stupendous move to undertake an understanding and a miracle if it succeeded. True, modern psychology has informed us that apparently normal people suffer from maternal or paternal fixations, but they cannot be divested of the remotest human qualities as Mr. O'Neill would lead us to believe. And why, if his character

1. The Drama in Transition. Louis Goldberg

drawing is so thorough and convincing, does this playwright inevitably succeed in arousing pity for his leading male characters and our contempt for his prominent women? Perhaps this practice conforms with Mr. O'Neill's occasional assertion that God is a woman, thus inferring that God is also cruel.

Except for the first part of Scene 1 of Act 1 in Part 3, the play moves in unrelieved somberness. The reader has an occasional flickering admiration for the direct and inevitable ends toward which Vinnie progresses in the avenging of her father's death, but why does Mr. O'Neill permit the whole structure to be destroyed when Vinnie's thoughtless allusion to Adam Brant, as she talks with Peter Niles, reveals that her procedure of revenge was born of her personal jealousy and not primarily from filial devotion? In other words, Mr. O'Neill leaves the play with the double purpose of revenge unexplained and unjustified. Neither does he make clear the extent of Vinnie's attraction for the native chieftain she encountered in her cruising of the south seas, an incident she brings forth as her trump card when she deliberately arouses Peter's repulsion of her.

The proverb of the fools who do not hesitate to trespass on angels' hallowed territory is called to mind as these adverse criticisms crowd thick and fast. Perhaps one should not be too diagnostic but regard *MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA* as a noble attempt at a modern trilogy and a success as far as its forcefulness and effectiveness are concerned.

Synopsis of LOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA

Part 1. Homecoming

Act 1

Exterior of the Mannon house in New England. April, 1865. Seth, the Mannon gardener and man of all work shows visitors around the estate. They furnish the exposition wherein one learns of the wealth, hate and hidden skeletons of the Mannon family, including the marriage of Old Abe Mannon's brother David to a French nurse girl. Hazel Niles, who is in love with Orin Mannon, comes to call on Vinnie and the talk drifts to the expected homecoming from the Civil War of Ezra Mannon and his son. When Lavinia is alone, Peter Niles, Hazel's brother, asks Lavinia to marry him but she refuses, saying her father needs her. Later, the hatred between Lavinia and Christine, her mother, is forcibly presented. When Captain Brant appears, Lavinia confronts him with his parentage - his mother was Marie Brantome and he has adopted the first part of her surname because he was ashamed of his Mannon blood and wished to revenge the hatred of the Mannon family.

Act 2

Ezra Mannon's study. No time has elapsed since the last act. Lavinia tells her mother she knows that Brant is her lover. She orders Christine to call Brant to her and relinquish him. When Christine is alone and has summoned Captain Brant, she tells him of Lavinia's suspicions and orders him to send her some poison, the prescription for

which she gives him. They renew their pledge of love even as they plot Ezra Mannon's death.

Act 3

One week later. The exterior of the Mannon house. Lavinia and Christine are awaiting Ezra Mannon's arrival. When he comes, the attitudes of Christine and Lavinia(Vinnie, as she is called) are interesting. Christine is alternately calm and apprehensive and Vinnie is maternally solicitous about her father's health and comfort while she hurls bitter innuendos at her mother. Alone with her husband, Christine soon dispels his fears and jealousy as she enslaves him to her charm.

Act 4

Ezra Mannon's bedroom. Christine paces the floor in a turmoil of repulsion and boredom while Mannon accuses her of betrayal. As his jealousy becomes more intense, his weak heart is attacked by pain and Christine, instead of handing him the prescribed medicine, gives him some poison tablets which she holds to his mouth with a glass of water. As Mannon dies, he accuses her of murder and his call brings Vinnie rushing to him. She hears his accusation of Christine as he dies. Christine faints from the fright and shock and as she falls to the floor, the box of poison tablets rolls from her limp grasp.

Part 2. The Hunted

The exterior of the Mannon house. Two nights after the murder of Ezra Mannon. The townspeople leave the house

after offering their messages of condolence. Even Dr. Blake does not suspect that Ezra died from poisoning for Christine has impressively described a severe heart attack. Christine warns Hazel Niles that Vinnie is morbid and that Hazel must marry Orin to prevent him from coming under his sister's influence. Later, when Orin has arrived, Vinnie tells him of her suspicions regarding Christine but when Orin sees his mother, he succumbs immediately to her fascination. Later, coming from the house and finding Vinnie alone, Christine is unable to learn from her daughter's frozen silence if she found a box of sleeping tablets which Christine says she has lost.

Act 2

The sitting room of the Mannon house. The scene follows the previous episode. Orin is completely captivated by his mother's charm and she wipes out the suspicions which Vinnie has kindled. She even tells Orin that Vinnie is insane and jealous of Christine because Brant did not court her. Christine does not hesitate to tell her son that the alleged meetings with Brant in New York were fabrications of Vinnie's imagination and that Vinnie accuses her mother of being responsible for Ezra Mannon's death. Christine's candour is utterly disarming but when Orin has gone to view his father's body and Vinnie has appeared in stony silence, Christine gives herself away by begging Vinnie not to tell Orin about Brant.

Act 3

Ezra Mannon's study. Mannon is laid on his bier and Orin pays a silent tribute to his father. When Vinnie comes in, he accuses her of slander against their mother but Vinnie asserts she can prove her accusations. She places the box of poison tablets on her father's body and when Christine enters the room, she sees the box. Recoiling as thought she had been struck, she rushes out.

Act 4

Two nights later. A section of a clipper ship tied to a wharf in East Boston. A chantyman sings a drunken song while Brant paces the deck of the boat of which he is skipper. Christine appears and Brant hurries her down to his cabin which is revealed by sliding apart two sections in the side of the ship. While Brant and Christine are on their way to the cabin, Vinnie and Orin gain access to the deck and take a position over the transom which tops the cabin in which Brant and Christine are seated. All four persons are visible. Brant and Christine talk of Vinnie's suspicions and plan to go away together and marry within a few days. After Brant has escorted Christine off the ship and to the end of the wharf, he returns to the ship and his cabin where Orin shoots him dead.

Act 5

Exterior of the Mannon house. The following night. Christine, believing that Orin and Vinnie are visiting friends, nervously paces up and down as she looks for their return home. When they appear, they immediately

inform their mother that they followed her when she went to see Brant and that they have shot him. Orin takes compassion on his mother's terror but Vinnie is as emotionless as always. When Christine flees into the house, followed by Orin, Vinnie stonily awaits the shot which signals the death of her mother - the suicide to which Vinnie has driven her. When Orin, in a frenzy, comes from the house, Vinnie calms him and orders him to send for Dr. Blake with the explanation that Christine has committed suicide from brooding over her husband's death.

Part 3. The Haunted

Act 1, Scene 1

Exterior of the Mannon house. It is boarded up. The time is the evening of a summer day, one year later. Seth and some superstitious drunken workmen are opening the house in preparation for the return of Orin and Vinnie who have been away for a year. The work is slow for the workmen are fearful that ghosts might haunt the ill-fated mansion. Hazel and Peter arrive with the news that the Mannons will return the next day and they go into the house to make it ready for the brother and sister. Soon, Vinnie and Orin come up the driveway. Vinnie bears a striking resemblance to her mother and Orin has become a shade of his father. Vinnie is confident and brave as she leads the terrified and shrinking Orin into the house.

Act 1, Scene 2

The sitting room. The action follows scene 1. When Vinnie is alone with Peter, she tells him that Orin is obsessed with jealousy of her and fear of his mother's

death. Orin returns to the room with Hazel and seeing Vinnie in Peter's arms, he is shaken by a spasm of jealousy which amazes Hazel and Peter who cannot understand the change in him .

Act 2

Ezra Mannon's study. One month later. Orin, who spends much of his time in secret writing, admits to Vinnie that he is writing a history of the Mannon family - a history which tells all the crimes from that of old Abe Mannon to those committed by himself and Vinnie. Resenting Vinnie's authority, Orin accuses her of intimacy with a south sea chieftain during their travels, and as their mutual fury mounts, their hatred comes to a climax when they realize that they have become like their mother and father.

Act 3

The sitting room. Immediately after Act 2. When Hazel and Peter come to pay a visit, Orin gives to Hazel the envelope containing the manuscript of the Mannon history with the instruction to read it if anything happens to him. Vinnie, entering the room, notices the strained atmosphere and soon finds out that Orin has entrusted the manuscript to Hazel. The envelope is finally delivered to Vinnie who refuses to permit Orin to visit the Niles home. In despair, Hazel quits the house, vowing to forget the Mannons. Alone with her brother, Vinnie listens while he prates of her beauty, her fearlessness and the curse

of the haunted which he intends to put on her. Vinnie, in fear and repulsion, wishes Orin dead, and just as her wish drove her mother to suicide, so does her desire send Orin from the room with the remark that he is going to clean his gun. To Peter, who has just entered, Vinnie babbles of love as she waits in his arms for the shot which tells of Orin's death. Alone, she pledges herself to live in spite of the haunting Mannons ^{who} ~~which~~ gaze at her from the portraits on the wall.

Act 4

Exterior of the house. Three days later. Hazel comes to urge Vinnie to give up her promise to marry Peter for Hazel believes Vinnie's influence to be detrimental inasmuch as it seems to have sent Orin to his death. Vinnie refuses to give up Peter and when he comes, he is, at first, tender to her. Later, when he hears of Hazel's message, he becomes evasive and Vinnie's plea that they consummate their love without waiting for marriage shocks him, even though Vinnie affirms that she wishes to do so only to rid herself of the doubts which haunt her. In forwarding her plea, Adam Brant's name escapes her and the whole secret of her jealous revenge is made clear. Then, turning on Peter, she hurts him to the quick by insinuating an affair between herself and a south sea native. In a blind fury, Peter goes away for the last time and Vinnie, left alone with her memories and ghosts, orders old Seth to close the shutters over the windows behind which she will spend the remainder of her life when she, the last Mannon will be dead and the curse played out.

LUCRECE

Andre Obey

As this Thesis is completed, Houghton Mifflin Company announces a forthcoming publication of Andre Obey's LUCRECE. Mr. Brooks Atkinson is faintly caustic when he says: "Andre Obey out of Shakespeare and faithfully translated by Thornton Wilder is only a watered down pretenseThe literary qualities..although carefully mitred.....lack passion and beauty."¹ The text of the play is not available at bookstores but one hears from various sources, principally spasmodic comments in THE NEW YORK TIMES, that the drama utilizes several dramatic methods.

There are musical interludes, pageantry, pantomime, masque and dialogue in this version of Shakespeare's THE RAPE OF LUCRECE. In addition to the foregoing methods, two Narrators, a man and a woman, stand on either side of the stage and comment on the events which take place. Their function resembles that of a chorus for they are interpretive, critical and prophetic, and their metal masks lend a stern foreboding to their utterances. Throughout the play and according to the tempo of the action and the significance of their proclamations, they mount and descend throne-like pedestals.

To quote Mr. Atkinson again (he seems to be greatly concerned about LUCRECE even though he has few bouquets for the play): ".....it has included a little Greek tragedy,

1. The New York Times December 21, 1932

a little pantomine, a little modern realism, but not much of any one."² Discriminating friends have been lavish in their appreciation of the artistry and beauty of LUCRECE as a production, but inevitably the name of Miss Katharine Cornell is the peg to which they hang their effusions and for this reason, personal reaction must be withheld until a study of the text is possible.

². The New York Times January 1, 1933

CONCLUSION

How has Expressionism affected the theme and technique of the contemporary drama? Will Expressionistic plays become the criterion by which to judge the merits of the drama of the future, or is Expressionism a temporary medium whose voice will be obliterated with the passing of the frenzy of jazz which, pedagogues claim, is already relinquishing its reign in favor of a certain conservatism? Will the classical plays of three, four or five acts continue to be the standards of dramatic construction or will the new drama, in all its fascinating and bewildering forms, usurp the older plays and exercise authority? What will happen to the carefully defined norms of drama - the pageant, the masque, the interlude and pantomime - when several or all the forms are combined in a single play?

Although the new drama seems to be making the headway of a downward rushing snowball, the more extreme forms of Expressionism remain in the situation where the classes and not the masses applaud and sanction them. True, the American people adopted THE GREEN PASTURES with immediate enthusiasm but consider how skeptically they regarded MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA, THE ADDING MACHINE, GOAT-SONG and LUCRECE. They went, they saw and they left in bewilderment. Imagine their perplexity in witnessing a production of THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR or TREAD THE GREEN GRASS! As stated in the PREFACE to this THESIS, the writer believes that EXPRESSIONISM is plastic enough to embrace any drama which departs from the conventional

technique and so many plays, although not labelled as Expressionistic, are marked by the advent of innovations which establish them as not-too-far distant connections.

Characters have been kaleidoscopic in their versatility and types. Human nature in all its forms and complexities has been presented. The Lord of THE GREEN PASTURES is a figure of unforgettable simplicity and dignity, and associated with him are the angels, each a personality and as such, highly individualized. With communities and churches producing pageants abundant with angels and other supernatural beings, it is strange that the professional drama has never been on more intimate terms with the company of heavenly creatures, but the celestial persons of Mr. Connelly's drama are presented with a vividness and appeal which make their appearances worth their erstwhile absence from the stage. Aside from the fact that the heavenly people are negroes, there is no reason for "the daring liberty" presumably being taken with the personification of the Deity, for is not the same practice observed at Oberammagau as well as in American churches of professed strictness to theological tenets?

The new drama does not hesitate in presenting abnormal or neurotic persons. Nina in STRANGE INTERLUDE is a thoroughly unlovable woman as well as a case for a highly skillful nerve specialist. The number of persons ridden by obsessions is amazing to behold. Jones of THE EMPEROR JONES is driven to destruction by his fear of capture and the slavery of his heritage; TIME IS A DREAM furnishes a

situation in which Nico is hounded to death by his theory of fatalism and Romee furthers that premonition with her consciousness of Nico's predestination. Billy Brown, in Mr. O'Neill's drama of that name, forever imitates Dion Anthony, and even after the death of his friend, he continues his deception in order to retain Margaret's affection. And can anyone contradict the immovable stony attitude of Vinnie in MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA as she moves like an inexorable fate until her purposes are accomplished?

Characterization is also brought about by reaction to the moods and tempo of environment. Consider poor Zero in THE ADDING MACHINE. He is a man whose importance parallels the number his name suggests and he is a slave to a routine which he followed for twenty-five thankless years. He is deprived of his livelihood because a machine of great simplicity and proficiency is installed in his place. The Young Woman of MACHINAL is a desperate example of the frenzy which descends upon a sensitive person when exposed to the blatant staccato ~~and~~ discord of present day civilization. Every noise from the clatter of typewriter keys in her office to the mingled droning of the priest's voice and an aeroplane above the death house conspire to perpetuate her misery and disastrous search for happiness.

Then there is the situation in which a person of irreproachable character is brought to no good ends through the deliberate projection of degrading circumstances. The simple Janson in MIMA is a pawn moved here and there and even his fortitude cannot wholly withstand the temptations

so invitingly dangled before him. His return to goodness is accomplished with such rapidity that the reader wonders if the strenuousness of reform is not unduly exaggerated by zealous welfare workers.

There are many character types encountered in these plays. The clear-cut presentation of such figures as Christine and Vinnie in *MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA* and the familiar community figures in *PROCESSIONAL* require no intricate study. However, the half-real personalities which move through some of the plays offer a challenging consideration of their types and functions. Nico in *TIME IS A DREAM* is never vital for he seems to be a vague figure who touches at once the past, the present and the future as the theme of the play indicates.

Although he is a dynamic character, Lazarus in *LAZARUS LAUGHED* never assumes the clarity of reality because of his unfathomable attitude toward the glimpse he has had of the Beyond. In *MAN AND THE MASSES* the Woman is depicted as a rather elusive person torn between the conflicting demands of wifehood and service for the masses. She is unconvincing enough to be but half-real and the reader is not sure of her status. *THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS* is filled with characters whose very human qualities often evolve into fantastic personalities. Even Christopher Columbus himself, together with the mythical figures he encounters on sea and land, moves like the shadow of a dream in the progression of the story. *TREAD THE GREEN GRASS* likewise offers unusual and fantastic characterization in the persons

of Young Davie, the Old Man and the Old Woman, and one wonders if it is not possible to place some of Signor Pirandello's brain children in the same category.

Deities and demi-gods are not overlooked as one attempts to make a brief classification of the types of characterizations this Thesis contains. The Lord of THE GREEN PASTURES has been discussed; Satan is an interesting if silent figure in MIMA; the unseen Monster in GOAT SONG demands the homage of a half-god and even the human beings in R.U.R., by virtue of their superiority over the robots they created, are self-appointed gods in the island kingdom they command.

Illustrative action has been expressed through significant media. No longer is it confined to mere dumb-show and pantomime for it utilizes all the resources of the theatre and the cinema for its projection and in addition to revealing characterization and developing plot, it establishes mood and tempo in action.

In THE ADDING MACHINE, Zero's mania over his dismissal and his desire to kill are vividly presented by the revolving of the office floor, the crash of innumerable off-stage noises and the flash of red light which symbolizes the deluge of his madness. Throughout most of THE EMPEROR JONES, the insistent beat of the tom-toms convey the inevitability of Jones' capture as well as the mounting frenzy within him. As heretofore stated, MACHINAL offers several effective instances of machine motivated atmosphere and situation. One of the most striking examples occurs in the scene where

the Young Woman becomes almost hysterical by a combination of noises - the piano in the speakeasy, the music from the hurdy-gurdy, the repeated narrative of the Man's murder of the Mexican bandit, and the culmination of all the voices and murmurs into the words "Bottles" and "Stones".

Illustrative action which is less blatant and more skillfully conveyed is found in THE GREEN PASTURES when Gabriel, worried by the Lord's concern over the wickedness of his human children, noiselessly polishes his horn and purses his lips in preparation for the signal which will end the futile defiance of the earth-dwellers and remove a load of care from the Lord's shoulders. But the Lord, even though his back is turned to his helping angel, intercepts Gabriel's motion with a quiet, "Not yet, Gabe." Gabriel's astonishment and chagrin are delightful to behold.

In PROCESSIONAL a racial characteristic of Cohen, the Jewish store proprietor, is admirably presented when news of the approaching encounter between the militia and the strikers inspires him to advertise a sale of firearms and the national flag. A gripping bit of illustrative action is included in THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR and it serves to purge the reader of sympathy. The Soldier, about to return to certain death on the battlefield, sobs bitterly as he faces the rising sun while Aude, the girl for whom he has risked everything in order to see her again, falls asleep, leaving the Soldier to keep a lonely vigil in the stony coldness of the dawn. This action on the part of the Soldier reveals a magnitude of suffering by one who has touched the depths of

disillusionment and spiritual isolation.

Modern psychiatry offers unusual opportunities in the new dramatic technique. Freud and his cohorts are remembered in the complexes which characterize Vinnie in *MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA*, and Nina in *STRANGE INTERLUDE*. Vinnie's terrible jealousy of her mother who enjoys the love of Adam Brant, the man whom Vinnie desires, becomes as powerful an obsession as her determination that her mother must suffer for betraying her husband. In *STRANGE INTERLUDE* Nina's fixation for Dr. Darrell and later for her son Gordon, mounts into a driving force which gives her no peace or happiness. An advanced case of neurosis is presented in the person of the Young Woman in *MACHINAL* who fails to adjust herself to life as became her environment.

That imitation of a person will bring about a resemblance to the object imitated is one of the themes of *THE GREAT GOD BROWN*. Billy Brown's once cheerful and complacent face assumes the same expression as Anthony's features after prolonged contact with the latter's mask. Those students of psychology who believe that a mind can project the fate of an individual will find substance for their argument in the attitude of Romee and Nico in *TIME IS A DREAM* and those students of metaphysics who assert that times move in a cycle and that events which seem to be past are in reality approaching nearer, will find food for thought in the same play.

The phantasmagoria in *BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK* reflects the exaggerated proportions which unfulfilled dreams and

apprehensions assume when they are denied expression or sublimation. The conflict which ensues within a soul is uniquely presented in *THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS* when M. Claudel uses two Christopher Columbuses to illustrate the struggle between the remote Columbus who would fare forth on his adventurous search for a trade-route to the East and the Columbus who is hesitant before the misunderstanding of the people who ridicule his plans. Again the student of the new drama must wrestle as Signor Pirandello wrestles with such problems as what is reality, what is illusion, when does one become the other or are they inseparable and distinguished by objective perception only?

The dialogue in many of the plays discussed has been singularly interesting. In *MAN AND THE MASSES* the dialogue is arranged in verse form although the theme and argument of the play is well suited to harsher expression. In the same drama, some of the speeches are contained within three or four words.

TIME IS A DREAM and *THE ADDING MACHINE* offer lengthy passages of discourse and even *THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR* contains a few utterances of twenty lines or more. On the other hand, the last named play is also characterized by its lines of two and three words or single sentences. As stated earlier, the occasional stage directions are marked by the same brevity and yet, the arrangement does not make for sharpness or jaggedness for this play is unusual in its lofty beauty.



Brief scintillating (~~scintillating~~) scraps of dialogue are found in BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK and they are interspersed with the occasional vague phraseology associated with a play of its dreamy and nightmare progression. Signor Pirandello's works offer fertile opportunities for the sparkling as well as subtle discourse of which he is master. It has been interesting to note how single words can be terrible in their intensity or profound in their deep significance. Such a realization causes one to wish that words could be arranged as hues in colors and each word could be the epitome of the action or emotion it conveys.

The Chorus cannot pass without comment. THE BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS allows frequent expression by the group which symbolizes everything from bystanders on the streets to the fears which Columbus will encounter in his petitions for money as well as the dangers of the sea. Mr. O'Neill uses the Chorus as commentators in LAZARUS LAUGHED and the Jazz Miners in PROCESSIONAL establish the keynote of the action by their rendering of wild unrestrained music. In MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA one cannot help but admire Mr. O'Neill's deft means of exposition when the visiting townspeople, through the medium of their acrid comments, reveal the oddity of the Mannon family and the tragic homecoming of Ezra Mannon which culminated in his death. Although the groups of townspeople cannot be called a Chorus, they fulfill the functions of the Chorus by their accurate and startling conjectures. The dialogue of the dramas under discussion is

not restricted either in length or volume, for the leisurely verbosity of the Chorus and the sharp economy of contemporary jazz are equally effective in exposition and motivation.

The themes of the plays have ranged from the imaginative but simple sequence of *TIME IS A DREAM* to the complexity of exposition and objective of *EACH IN HIS OWN WAY*, and from the symbolically traced *BOOK OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS* to the glaring reality of *MACHINAL*. That the modern drama reflects current vogues, theories and tendencies is a proved point. *OF THEE I SING* is a riot of good-natured fun directed at our well-meaning if occasionally comical law-makers as well as a target for some of our national absurdities - bathing beauty contests, political campaigns, diplomatic entanglements and mob emotions. *BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK*, which appeared several years before the foregoing farce, takes many flings at personal and economic foibles - marriage for money, the power and trivialities of "Big Business" and the subsidizing, mechanizing and marketing of genius.

MAN AND THE MASSES is violent with the demands of justice for the working masses and R. U. R. apprehends the era when the creation of mechanical men will bring about the economic and physical overthrow of mankind. *THE ADDING MACHINE* and *MACHINAL* present two unimportant human beings who are bewildered in a mechanized world and sordid environment, and who find only discord and maladjustment in a cosmos where the search for greater happiness and expression becomes futile.

The themes of love run the gamut from the tender

idealistic bond between the Soldier and Aude in THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR to the incestuous fixation which Vinnie evinces in MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA. Complete and unselfish love for all living creatures rolls in laughter from the heart of Mr. O'Neill's Lazarus to be checked by the deliberate attempt to bring human men to depravity by the soul-destroying mill in MIMA. Personal ambition goads the negro usurper in THE EMPEROR JONES and a far reaching dream for the glory of Spain urges Christopher Columbus toward adventure in M. Claudel's vivid chronicle drama.

Laughter accompanied by tears have marked the passing of PROCESSIONAL; tragedy unrelieved by hope terminates MAN AND THE MASSES; ecstasy breaking on a sob concludes the wistful beauty of THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR; and realities neighboring on greatness are found in the spiritual heights of THE GREEN PASTURES.

There is no typical American or European drama any more than there is a typical personality. The American Mr. Rice brings forth a play heavy with satirical symbolism and M. Raynal produces a drama that a New England purist might have written. As indicated in the discussion of THE GREEN PASTURES, iron bound rules of dramatic technique are forgotten as the dramatic rule becomes "Each in his own tongue." The dramatists themselves would probably scoff if an attempt were made to catalogue their works and they would go serenely on their ways, unmindful of the last set of principles they followed in developing a plot. They create people and

situations idealistic beyond human comprehension and they turn about to construct life-like mirrors in which we occasionally see ourselves.

The new technique is as difficult to define as the taste of tea or the capturing of a wave on the sea shore. "Pedagogues make rules but geniuses break them" and the drama of the future is bound to assume even stranger forms when television is perfected and the cinema is presented in the third dimension. In order to prevent the new forms from oblivion in the category of closet drama, Broadway and Hollywood, as well as the other cinema and theatre centres of the world, must join forces in the production of Expressionistic drama - a drama which is still handicapped by its youth.

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